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JOHN BULL

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REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

John Moore found his new novel in the hop-fields

FOR John Moore the countryside of his native Gloucestershire seemed to provide everything—except hops. So a few years ago he made the journey across the Malvern Hills into Herefordshire and, for six weeks, joined the pickers in the abundant hop-fields. "I admit that I didn't live rough with the other pickers," says Moore. "I stayed at the local pub." But he met the gipsies, and the plot for his twenty-sixth book began to take shape. The result is *September Moon*, which begins on page 5. He has already sold the film rights.

Moore's family were auctioneers in Tewkesbury, where he was born forty-nine years ago. But Moore decided to write. At the age of twenty-two, having earned £100 for his first novel, he set out for London. For ten years "I wrote novels I would rather forget now in between newspaper assignments in Britain and Spain."

He had learned to fly, and at the outbreak of the war joined the Fleet Air Arm. He served in Iceland, the West Indies, West Africa —and Soho, where he was stationed while helping to plan the invasion of Europe. After the war, Moore returned to Tewkesbury, accompanied by his Australian bride Lucile. Then *Portrait Of Elmbury*, followed by *Brensham Village*, established him as one of Britain's most charming novelists of country life. And Moore himself joins fully in the life of the countryside and of his village, Kemerton. He even runs the local Sunday cricket team, for which he keeps wicket. Only when he surveys his large and beautiful garden does he sometimes sigh for his London days. "The trouble is," he says apologetically, "I hate gardening."

"THE life of a freelance cartoonist is a serious business," says Lawrence Siggs, who illustrates our feature *Why?* which is on page 23 this week.

Siggs starts work on his humour before 9 a.m., when he locks himself in the studio in his "inconvenient" nine-room house at Hornchurch, Essex. "I used to find that all my best ideas came at night, so I kept a pencil and pad under my pillow," he says. "But after months of sleepless nights I gave it up." Now, when his mind is blank, he just writes down a word and stares at it until he can think of something funny connected with it. By the end of a good day he will have roughed out half a dozen cartoons ready for vetting by his wife Doris. "By the end of a bad day I will have just a lot of words written on a lot of pieces of paper."

A professional cartoonist since he left the mercantile marine thirty-five years ago, when he was twenty-two, Siggs is never amused by his own jokes and is sceptical of success. Even when the late Queen Mary requested the original of one of his wartime cartoons he was unimpressed. "She used to collect so many things that she was bound to want some artist's original cartoon sooner or later."

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for faces and places

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Free Speech

- **Hypocrites who kill on the roads**
- **Pets who should be on sentry-go**
- **Why husbands are more sensitive than wives**

ONLY 0.5 per cent of all London accidents, says the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police, are caused by "excessive speed having regard to the conditions." This is balderdash.

If vehicles travelled at walking pace nobody would get killed. But because we think it essential to get around in a hurry we kill over 5,000 people every year. Talk of "unavoidable" accidents is nonsense. The motorist who says "I hadn't a chance—she ran right in front of the car" should be reminded bluntly that he *could* have stopped in time had he been going slowly enough.

So, until we are civilized enough to impose a low speed limit on all roads where there is any chance of an accident, let us at least not be hypocrites about the reasons for death on the road.—T. M., London, W.C.2.

Transformed Teeth

The Polar regions are still the source of carvings like the ones of tiny animals described by Farley Mowat in his story "Stranger In Blallalay" (JOHN BULL, July 20). Whalers carve them from the teeth of sperm whales. The tooth shown with the model

whale in my photograph is about six inches long.—GEORGE SMITH, Wolsey Avenue, Walthamstow, London, E.17.

Burial Customs

Why are clergymen buried the opposite way to lay members of the congregation? I believe the laity lie with their feet to the east and the clergy with their feet to the west.—H. CLEWLOW, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

"During the funeral service, Roman Catholic and Church of England clergymen are always laid with their heads towards the altar—facing the congregation as in life," says the National Association of Funeral Directors. "And this principle is frequently extended to the burial ground where an early Christian tradition still persists that people should be buried with their feet towards the east 'whither they must hasten at the last trump.'"

Riddle-Me-Railway

The choice of watercolour paintings in British railway carriages instead of out-dated photographs does much

to relieve the monotony of long journeys. But I would like to see a few of these spaces filled with quizzes —either general knowledge tests or riddles.—AILEEN M. NISBET, Alness Crescent, Glasgow.

Jumping The Red

The War Office statement that escorts of military convoys don't normally have the power to overrule traffic lights ("Free Speech," July 20) is misleading. They have no power whatsoever.

Each army driver, together with civilian, police, firemen and ambulance drivers, is guilty of an offence if he drives against the red light.

The police are the only persons with authority to control traffic, and when they deem it necessary to take over from traffic lights they usually switch them off.—WILLIAM TATE, Westmoreland Street, Glasgow, S.2.

Decimating Bees

I asked an old gardener why my runner beans weren't forming properly. The flowers were just dropping off. He said that it was lack of pollination because all the bees were being killed off by crop spraying, and that many bee-keepers in the Home Counties were giving up because of huge losses from this cause.—T. G. MITCHELL, St. Giles-in-the-Wood, Torrington, North Devon.

"The increase in crop spraying since the war has caused us incalculable losses among honey bees," says the British Beekeepers' Association. "Many of Britain's 109 species of wild bees have also been wiped out by this and by the clearance of hedges and ditches which were their natural homes. In Denmark the types of spray which can be used are severely restricted—and they must only be used between 7 p.m. and 6 a.m. when flowers likely to attract bees are closed."

Dog Watch

I agree with British Railways that day excursion rates for dogs are unnecessary. No one would wish to leave an animal alone at home for long, but it is a poor-spirited dog who wouldn't prefer to guard his own home for one day rather than be taken to the coast with a train-load of day trippers.—W. J. DAVIS, Priory Hill, Dartford, Kent.

Creative Playtime

What a boon it would be to parents with children on holiday if local authorities in Britain followed the example set by the Tivoli pleasure gardens, Copenhagen!

There I saw a kiosk where, for a small fee, children aged between five and eight could draw, paint and model for a whole morning or afternoon using large supplies of paper, paints and clay provided by the two young women in charge.

Adults get a free art show, too, because the paintings are hung on the windowsill to dry and the gaily

painted clay models are ranged upon shelves. Nearby are a sand pit and a model traffic layout, round which children can ride toy tricycles and cars and learn traffic sense the safe way by obeying road signals and the directions of a mechanical policeman. —MISS W. V. WALL, Liverpool.

Operation Samaritan

Having witnessed two road accidents recently and helped in tending the injured, I feel that there is a serious shortage of first-aid equipment available on roads outside built-up areas.

Surely first-aid kits could be made available at public houses, for example. — W. GORE, West Street, Newbury, Berkshire.

"At least there will soon be a first-aid kit at every farm in the country," says the Ministry of Agriculture. "The Agricultural (First Aid) Regulations, 1957, have made this law and we hope that at least one person on each farm will take one of the first-aid courses being organized by the National Farmers' Union."

Impatient Patient

Whatever Mrs. R. R., of Devonport, says about patients who peep at the letters they are given to take to consultants ("Free Speech," July 27), I believe that all this hush-hush business causes more mental suffering than anything else. How can any doctor reasonably suggest that such letters have nothing to do with the patients concerned?

Treated as sensible adults, people would behave as such with very few exceptions, and would be more likely to seek advice immediately for symptoms which might mean trouble instead of postponing the humiliating experience of being treated as half-wits.

I've not yet had cause to open such a letter by steaming, but if the occasion ever arises I'll open it—in the general practitioner's surgery.—EX-NURSE, Yeovil.

Bleating Ratepayers

Ten years as a local councillor have left me sick and tired of the bleatings of ratepayers with petty backyard grievances.

About six of these menaces buttonholed me after I had opened a garden party recently and showered me with complaints ranging from: "Why doesn't the council trim our grass verges more often?" to "It's time that we had a school bus for the children in our road."

All but two of the complaints could have been remedied months or even years previously had the local councillors concerned been told. But the moaners had been too apathetic even to find out the names and addresses of their ward representatives.—T. S., Middlesex.

Breaking Up Noise

It seems incredible that with all the skill and ingenuity of our engineers nobody has been able to make a silencer for that most fiendish of tools, the pneumatic drill. Noise is one of the major nuisances of our age. —R. WILSON, Southey Avenue, Kingswood, Bristol.

"One British firm claims that it can halve noise by covering the piston and exhaust with a fibreglass and felt jacket," says an engineer, "but if you muffle the exhaust too much you lose power. Another firm experimenting on similar lines uses a rubber bag. But no one can do much about the clatter of steel hitting concrete."

Smarting Male

My wife laughs when I scald my fingers in her near-boiling washing-up water and tells me that men are babyish and always fussing about small things. The fact is, of course, that men are and always have been more sensitive than women and capable of finer degrees of feeling and emotion.

Men fret and wriggle on hard gallery seats in theatres, and climb shivering out of cold water while their girl friends remain comparatively unaffected. And a woman can go on working at an awkward angle in a confined space long after a man would have got up to relax his aching muscles.

It's no credit to women that they can suffer minor pain and discomfort in silence. It's just that their nervous systems are less highly developed.—E. T., Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire.

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THE COVER

THAT'S the worst of having sisters. All they're interested in is showing off their new shoes and party frocks—and courtesy naturally demands that their escort shall dress like a gentleman and not disgrace them. But the reluctant youngster in Critchlow's cover painting doesn't *want* to be a gentleman: he'd far rather get hot and dusty in the playground like all the others. Only when his elder sister's social sense has prevailed and he is stuffing cream buns at the tea party will he realise the truth: what you lose on the swings. . . .

An unforgettable new romance of the countryside and its people

September Moon

by ***JOHN MOORE***

Soon they would be gathering the harvest. But there were enemies other than time and weather . . .

TIM SOLLARS, sipping his cocoa at the back door of the Manor Farm, watched his father stride away through the mist with a gun over his shoulder, looking huge as a hero of some old tale. He was going to look for a covey of partridges because it was his custom always to bag a brace before breakfast on September 1. He had never failed. They would be hung for a week in the cool cellar so that they would be ready for Mrs. Sollars's birthday on the seventh.

Such customs had sanctity at Sollarshill Manor Farm. Life went by the calendar there, and John Sollars would no sooner omit the little ceremony of the partridges than his wife would forget to make the dripping cakes which went with the morning cocoa at hop-picking time.

Tim, as he stepped into his gumboots, caught a ghostly glimpse of his mother now, as she went in her white coat towards the dairy. It was a world of wraiths. Through it he went himself to fetch the tractor out of the open shed.

His sister, Carol, was perched half-way up a ladder against the shed. She said: "Take your old tractor away—and you can't bring it back here after this morning. I want to rig up my counter."

She was fixing a notice-board to the side of the shed. It was done in Gothic lettering: YE OLDE FARME SHOPPE. The hop-pickers could buy necessities there to save themselves the two-mile walk to the village. Last year Carol had bought a camera out of her profits. This year she was more ambitious and wanted a new dress for the dance they always gave at the end of hop-picking.

"Off the shoulders," she'd said. "Low. The kind Mummy won't buy me. . . ."

Tim started the tractor and drove out. The farmyard gate was open for the cows to come in. He

There was no poacher, only Tommy Tomkins's good-for-nothing daughter. "Oy!" shouted John Sollars. She quickened her pace

ILLUSTRATED BY BATCHELOR

went through it and drove fast up the hill, crossing the misted fields by guesswork or by some compass in his head.

Suddenly the mist vanished, parting before him like a curtain, and he was looking into the sunrise that came in shining splendour over the black Malverns. Before him lay the field called Abbots, from which yesterday they'd carried a crop of barley. Abbots lay now like a silver lake on the hilltop; a myriad of little spiders had busied themselves all night weaving cobwebs among the stubble, and a heavy dew had fallen on top of their close webs.

Tim drove the tractor into the field. Hitching on the plough, he began to tear up the stubble. Looking back over his shoulder, he saw the new-turned earth glowing rose-pink in the sun.

Tim was happy and curiously excited because hop-picking was about to begin. The parting of the mist had made him think of the curtain going up on a play; and the hop-picking was indeed a kind of play, acted for a month in this amphitheatre that lay between the Malverns and the Welsh hills. The hop-pickers provided the chorus: miners on holiday from Wales; factory workers from the Midlands; gipsies and half-gipsy "travellers"; all thrown together against the green frieze of the hops.

They were a pretty lively chorus. But the simple plot of the play was the race against the weather, rain and frost and the oncoming autumn. If John Sollars won the race by October the first there would be £20,000 worth of hops in the big white sacks called pockets stored in his barns. . . .

John Sollars was still in the mist as he walked up the stream side, but even if it had been a pea-soup fog he would have known to a yard where he was. He got to the plank bridge, crossed it and climbed the stile into a field of kale. He came out into the sun suddenly, and the wet kale-heads were shiny all round him.

Looking over them, he saw something moving against the hedge at the far side of the field. He thought at first it might be one of his men and wondered what he was doing there. Then he thought it was a poacher and angrily began to push his way through the kale. But now he saw it was a girl, a girl in trousers, walking by no means as a poacher walks but bold as brass, with her hands in her pockets and her shoulders thrown back. She whistled as she went along; and with astonishment he recognized her as that good-for-nothing daughter of Tommy Tomkins next door.

"Oy!" he shouted, and he knew she had heard him, for she quickened her pace without looking round. *Well,* thought John, *neighbour or no neighbour, I'm damned if I see why she wants to walk across my farm at seven o'clock in the morning.* She was heading for home, too; where the devil had she come from? John thought he'd intercept her and ask her what she thought she was up to.

The partridges were forgotten as he hurried through the kale. It was heavy going and as he brushed through he was aware of something odd and disturbing. His breath was coming short, he had a pain in his chest and he was sweating.

Suddenly a covey of partridges got up just in front of him. They were big black blobs right in the sun. He fired at one and heard the shot hit it with a *slap*; then the pain clawed at him fiercely and he had to lower the gun.

The attack let up for a moment, returned, but less sharply, and then it was gone. He felt the sweat very cold on his face.

Shaggy, the red setter, stood before him wagging her tail, with the partridge in her soft mouth.

He took the bird and stood still for a breather before going after the covey to get another bird and make up his traditional brace. He told himself the pain was simply indigestion.

FROM where he stood he could look down on Tommy Tomkins's place, the Hope Farm, and he leaned on his gun and contemplated it. It was brackeny, fuzzy, feggy, a farm in ruins.

He knew that it was mortgaged up to the hilt; every season somebody at an N.F.U. meeting took him aside and told him confidentially: "Tomkins is filing his petition," or "Tomkins is being sold up." Yet somehow the queer fellow hung on precariously, borrowing from the bank, borrowing from his friends, perpetually robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Custom, tidiness and good order were very dear to John Sollars. Tommy Tomkins's mania for strange beasts—Chinese geese, Muscovy ducks, hornless Herefords—was a sin against custom. So was the fact that he had married a foreigner, a Frenchwoman, though John charitably forgave him for that, since the woman was now dead.

Ever since her death, nearly three years ago, Tommy had been drinking a good deal; and that would doubtless complete his ruin, which was his own affair. What annoyed John Sollars was Tommy's habit of drinking night after night with his own labourers in the Royal Victoria. This, he felt, let everybody down.

Then there was that girl of his. Tim used to take her out, on the back of his first motorbike, when she was about seventeen. She'd been a fairish handful then—which was due to the French blood in her, John ingenuously supposed.

Nobody had been surprised when she ran away to London. Then, only a week ago, she had come back, out of the blue, and within an hour or two she and Tommy were celebrating her return in the Royal Victoria.

Looking across at the Hope Farm now, John let his glance travel down to the meadows that lay in the bend of the river, where a boundary hedge divided his land from Tommy's. On the near side of it there were some of his own cattle —he could recognize Sollarshill Sally, heavy in calf to Sampson; she was due on Michaelmas Day.

Beyond the hedge, which was Tommy's hedge and therefore straggly and unlaid, he could see some beasts which Tommy had bought in to fatten, and even at this distance they looked a scruffy lot; dealers' cattle, bought at market. It disquieted him to see them there, in the field next to his own beasts, with only that bad hedge in between.

He looked at his watch. It was nearly half-past seven. He called Shaggy and, without making a conscious decision, turned back towards the farmhouse. He told himself it was breakfast time; and at half-past eight he had an appointment with that hated sanitary inspector who always turned up before the hop-picking. ("Where you get a lot of people crowded together there's always a risk of epidemics, you see.") But he knew that he was making excuses. He was afraid of the pain.

So there would be only one partridge for Molly this morning. A custom had been broken; and that was a bad thing, somehow ominous....

Tommy Tomkins had meant to see to the

Marianne tugged her father's arm. "You are an old softie," she told him

"Ha !" said Black Herbie, grinning broadly at Wisdom. "You wants to get a good boss." Wisdom looked puzzled and wary. "We got a good boss," he said

boundary hedge, and he had actually recorded this intention on the back of an Income Tax envelope under the heading T.D.T. which meant "Things to do tomorrow." Almost every night before he went to bed he made out a list like that. But he hardly ever looked at the list in the morning; he usually found it in his breast-pocket days later, and was discouraged because it was still valid as a list of things to do tomorrow. None of them had been done.

This morning, however, because it was the first of September and the sun shone so bright and he remembered as soon as he woke up that Marianne was home—this morning he could almost persuade himself that it was a new kind of day and that he was a new kind of man.

He read through the list as he waited for the kettle to boil; it contained some extraordinary items such as *Do money* and *Bat off bank till pigs are sold;* but they did not daunt him today.

In the dining-room he found the table laid and there was a note in Marianne's handwriting: *Gone mushrooming. Cold ham in larder. Love.*

With a giant-killer's resolution Tommy put on his mucking-out mac; for he had decided to tackle the beastliest job first. He strode forth to muck out his pigs. This took him half an hour. Then he fed the turkeys and the hens. He cleaned out the fowl-houses and also swept clean the hop-floor in readiness for the first load of hops. The ground floor of the kiln presented a more complicated problem, because it was cluttered up with the parts of a home-made still which he had invented for the purpose of turning cider into applejack.

He had once thought there might be a market for applejack, and had dreamed of making a little fortune from it, but then he had learned that he would have to pay spirit duty and the project had been shelved, though he had managed to make a few experimental bottles before the still went wrong.

TOMMY now moved the still, piece by piece, into an adjacent outhouse. By the time he had finished all these jobs he was exhausted and he went in to have breakfast. He got tired very quickly nowadays. Too much drink, too many cigarettes; but he told himself that, if he really set about it, he could get fit again easily; and everything was going to be different, now that Marianne was home.

He was finishing his breakfast when he heard the postman at the door. He went out into the hall just as the letters came fluttering through the flap in the door. There were only two, and he recognized the disastrous import of them both even as they were tumbling into the wire box.

The blue envelope was addressed in the crabbed, meticulous handwriting of his brother George. The white one was from the bank. This could mean only one thing: that he was overdrawn beyond the limit.

Tommy opened first the letter from the bank, which was as he expected, and then the letter from George.

It began:

> My dear Tommy,
>
> I have been meaning for a very long time to tell you what is in my mind. Believe me, this letter distresses me as much to write as it will distress you to read. It is about the mortgage. Unless . . .

Tommy read it to the end and put it back in his pocket. *Finish*, he said to himself.

The first of September. It was to have been a different day, a new start, a beginning again. But now hope and resolution both faded. It would be the same as all the other days; only the footsteps of disaster, which he fled from all day long, would come just a little closer and would pad just a little louder, because of what George had written in the letter which ended "*Your still affectionate brother, George. . . .*"

The tractor bucked like a horse across ridge and furrow, and Tim, who enjoyed the sensation, let it rip. He had promised to meet his father in the lower hopyard at half-past eleven. Tomorrow Tim would be in charge of the pickers, and his father always liked to have everything planned beforehand.

He came to the gate of the hopyard and swung into it. There was his father leaning on the blackthorn thumbstick he always carried now.

John Sollars said: "I gave you the M.G. so

Continued on page 26

Can Mountbatten save the navy?

by W. E. ARMSTRONG

He took up the challenge that it was dying. With ruthless zeal he aims to give a diehard service an atomic trim

Wrens stand to attention as Admiral Earl Mountbatten, the First Sea Lord, arrives at the Royal Naval Air Station, Lee-on-Solent. Air power is the key to his new-look navy

THE Home Fleet putting to sea to meet and escort the Sovereign returning to Britain conjured up the image of mighty battleships and cruisers, of destroyers heaving on the flanks and naval aircraft twinkling overhead. It is a brave picture, but it is out of date. When the Queen came back in the Royal yacht from her visit to Denmark in May the fleet was indeed there to meet her. It was led by its Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir John Eccles. He had hoisted his flag in a minelayer.

The thought of this humble but necessary vessel leading what was until a few years ago the symbol of British might shocked and puzzled many people. It didn't shock the man who now presides over the future of the British Navy. Earl Mountbatten of Burma, First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, thinks the minelayer perfectly normal; it fits in with the new pattern of our naval forces, a shape which is largely due to his own influence and thinking.

The day in April, 1955, when Mountbatten entered the green, panelled room in the south-west wing of the Admiralty to take up his duties as First Sea Lord was the most rewarding moment in a life which has been packed with high and gilded phases. This was the room in which his father, Prince Louis of Battenberg, had worked in the same post forty-one years before, and from which he had been removed—after a lifetime of able and loyal service—by an hysterical anti-German campaign. It was an open secret that Earl Mountbatten's ambition was to avenge the memory of his father: on that day two years ago a broken circuit was closed.

"How do you feel, sir?" he was asked.

"Somewhat bewildered," replied the new First Sea Lord, "rather like a new boy reporting to school."

It was a school he knew better than most men, and Mountbatten, whether ashore or afloat, is not easily bewildered. But the overstatement was pardonable, for if public opinion could be believed he had been promoted to direct the destinies of a force which either did not or should not exist, or was about to be dissolved.

Over naval affairs, since the end of the last war, the cry in varying accents had been "Woe, woe!" The navy was moribund, obsolete, dead; a Cinderella service sheltering in the might of the United States. The Admiralty had been caught napping by events; it did not know what it wanted, or if it did was doing nothing about it. Naval construction was archaic; naval thinking was withering in the nuclear fall-out. Russia, never in its history a maritime power, was now threatening Britain and free Europe with three great fleets and a shoal of submarines.

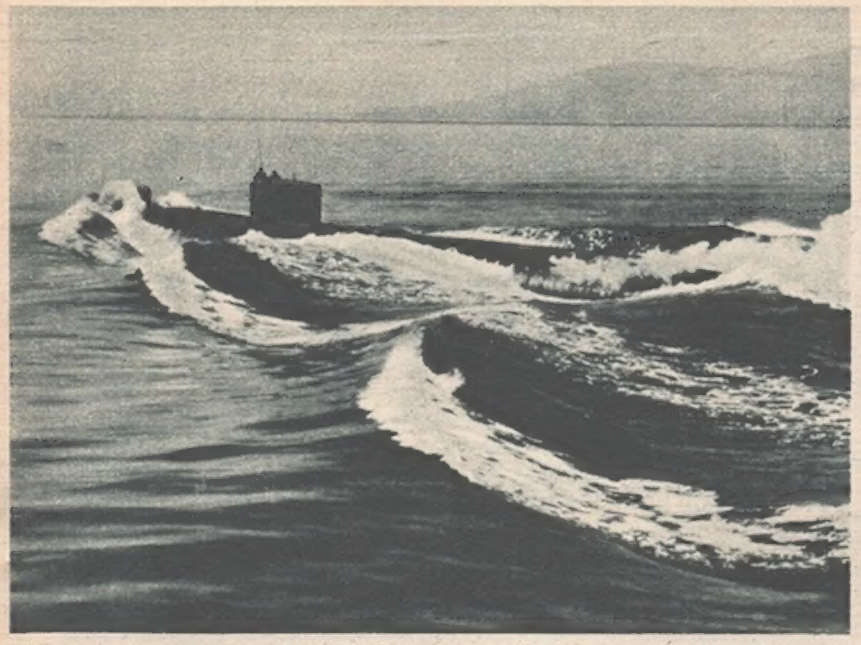
Admirals distinguished in the second World War—Lords Chatfield, Cunningham and Fraser—added their weighty scolding to the chorus; while, from his headquarters in the forest of Fontainebleau, Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery stated with shrill complacency that the navy could be written off, that there was in fact no need for a navy at all. A cartoonist in a London paper summed it all up by showing Nelson hiding his head under his one remaining arm in shame while the remorseless waters of the atomic age—labelled "Air Power"—rose lapping round his pedestal in Trafalgar Square.

It was not an absolutely faithful picture of the situation, but there were elements of truth in it. A definite, ruthless and—in the light of events—revolutionary policy was needed to cut the navy to the size of atomic realities. Mountbatten was chosen to find one: the job might have been the most daunting he had ever accepted.

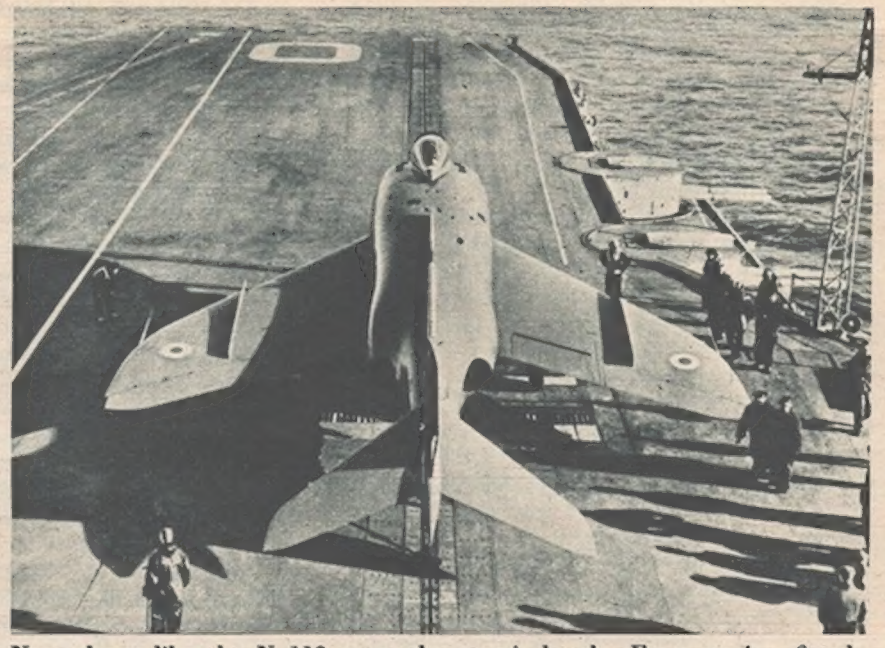
The Hiroshima bomb annihilated tradition and the text books. At one blow, with the coming of the bomb, the old conception of the Grand Fleet was invalid. We shall never see again the stately core of battleships surrounded by cruiser squadrons and a speedy screen of destroyers. More than a chapter had closed. The whole book of naval—and military and aerial—strategy had to be re-written, fast.

In spite of the navy's reputation for conservatism and mulish intransigeance when faced with new ideas, Mountbatten can claim that it was not taken by surprise. He can say with some justification that, on the contrary, the navy was the first arm to do some realistic thinking—about the new shape of its forces, the design of its warships and the modification of fleet tactics. In 1955, the Admiralty was explaining, in a White Paper on the Navy Estimates of that year, the general line on which future construction and organization would be based.

That general line, as always, was dictated by



The long-range submarine Explorer burns high-test peroxide, giving it an exceptional underwater speed. Nuclear submarines are being developed



New planes like the N 113 carry the atomic bomb. From carriers fitted with modern landing devices they will defend the navy—and hit back

the fact that, whatever might be the development of a global nuclear war, the British Isles remain dependent on seaborne supplies. Mountbatten himself is never tired of repeating this.

The protection of our convoys will be, as in the past, the primary rôle of our naval forces. This task will be complementary to the wider responsibilities which stem from the strategy on which the plans of the Atlantic Alliance are based, a strategy which assumes that the free nations must control the sea.

Whoever may be forgetting this the Russians, manifestly, are not. They are at this moment spending more than five times as much on naval construction as Britain, and it is significant that the overwhelming proportion of this programme is devoted to submarines, destroyers, cruisers, aircraft and mines—the classic armament for massive attack on merchant shipping. If in an all-out shooting war the deployment of such forces could cut the Atlantic sea routes, the efforts of our Western European allies would be disrupted.

Mountbatten does not deny that the main element in the deterrent to war is the strategic air force with its thermo-nuclear bomb. But air power, he and the navy point out, could not be used effectively if Europe were overrun—as it would be if a hostile sea prevented the arrival in European ports of oil, reinforcements and supplies. The new navy, therefore, is to be built with the implacable data in view that these islands must be kept intact and fighting.

To ensure this the fleet—for after all there was a fleet—which Mountbatten inherited was only partially equipped. It consisted of fifteen aircraft carriers, five battleships, twenty-seven cruisers, 294 destroyers and frigates, fifty-seven submarines and more than one thousand miscellaneous naval vessels: an imposing flotilla designed on the old pattern for the old pattern of war. The First Sea Lord, in fact, inherited two fleets: the one in existence, in the mass obsolete; and the one that had to be built or was building, in the mass theoretical.

When rearmament began in 1950 the Admiralty planned its construction blueprint on the prediction that a nuclear war would not break out for a period of at least ten years. During that time it was accepted that we would not be, in a naval sense, suitably armed to play our full part. This was not just another variant of the famous "calculated risk," but a risk imposed on us by events. And since scientific developments are moving faster than the best made plans, the purely hypothetical respite of ten years has already been considerably extended. But whatever the time limit, the navy had to be reduced and modernized to a formula suitable for the largely imponderable conditions of a future war.

Having come to the Admiralty—over the heads of six senior admirals on the active list—Mountbatten, the "man with the axe," set about his brief with the energy and disregard for convention and red tape for which he is famous.

While personally a man of great originality and initiative, his talents in high office have always been those for correlation and synthesis. He would rather find solutions than ask the questions. He might not agree with the government's proposals for the new fleet—though as the Cabinet's first naval adviser he must take responsibility for them—but he intends to carry them out. "It is a congenital weakness with me," he told Winston Churchill on his appointment as Supreme Commander in South East Asia, "to think I can do any job."

To Mountbatten, who has been called a "technical but naval" animal, the job of watching over the conception and emergence of a small, compact, hard hitting and push button navy should be admirably suited. For he has a passion for scientific modernization which amounts to mania. Anything which promises to trim the work of two men or machines to the work of one has his unqualified enthusiasm. He is something of an inventor himself and two of his devices, one to do with signalling, the other a simple method of "keeping stations" (the problem of maintaining distance which faces formating ships) have been adopted by the service. Unimpressed by the heat treatment he was receiving for the many strains and injuries he had collected in the course of a polo playing life, he introduced a radiotherapy technique which is used in several naval hospitals.

His mind is essentially and continually inquiring. Everything interests him, from the grandiose possibilities of the strategic use of artificial icebergs to the design of a pennant. The pennant, a small thing to be flown on the car of the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, was approved by the Queen six months ago. The icebergs, which date from 1943, were less successful. During the war the naval scientists thought up and perfected a formula from which almost indestructible ice masses could be manufactured from water containing a liberal content of sawdust.

Mountbatten was enthusiastic. His idea was to float or tow these synthetic ice islands towards the enemy coast, where they could serve very efficiently as floating airfields, or assembly platforms for assault troops. To further this

Air-minded men are helping to make the navy's new plans. Rear-Admiral A. N. C. Bingley (left) and Vice-Admiral Sir Caspar John both came up to the Admiralty from the Fleet Air Arm

The navy will be the one force able to beat an atomic attack, say experts. The guided missile Sea Slug will knock enemy planes from the sky

project he, at the Quebec Conference of 1943, produced two imposing blocks of ice—one natural, the other impregnated with the famous sawdust—and invited the Allied Chiefs of Staff to attack them successively with an axe. An American general shattered the first to pieces before nearly breaking his wrist on the resilient surface of the second.

Delighted with his demonstration and determined to drive the point home, Lord Louis then fired a heavy revolver at the ice. The bullet, as he hoped, didn't penetrate; it described a graceful ricochet which almost killed Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal standing nearby. The idea was turned down forthwith, but Mountbatten still believes that it had great possibilities. That might never be proved; but it is certain that the advent of atomic submarines and the replacement of battleships by guided-missile vessels will not be resisted by someone who can think up uses for an artificial iceberg.

One aspect of the new navy appeals to another of Mountbatten's characteristics—his insistence on efficient economy. From the day of his arrival in the Admiralty he has attacked waste.

It was he who was behind the decision to close Scapa Flow last year. On his orders shore establishments which he considered redundant are being "paid off" or drastically reduced. Portsmouth itself, the navy's home address, is being gradually stripped. Most dramatic of all, an attack on something which is woven into the fabric of the English myth, Mountbatten didn't hesitate to condemn our remaining battleships to the scrap-yard. Anson, Howe, Duke of York and King George V, glorious monsters of many epic actions, wait with foul decks and rusting steel for the attentions of the blowtorch. With them was condemned a wholesale lot of fleet carriers, cruisers, destroyers, frigates, minesweepers and survey ships.

Mountbatten's axe will, according to the latest figures, reduce naval manpower by 30,000 men in five years and will this year save the taxpayer £25 million. The money asked for this year, nevertheless, is still an enormous total of more than £386 million. How is it going to be used, and in what way will the cuts in money, ships, bases and shore establishments affect the efficiency of such naval forces we have left or contemplate building?

In the first place, Mountbatten and the Admiralty have made it clear that the navy in its new guise will not be a highly specialized force groomed only for effective intervention in an all-out nuclear war. It will still fulfil its two peacetime tasks: "showing the flag," which is a euphemism for the more or less active support of British policies overseas; and keeping our world-wide trade routes open. In war, as before, its three duties will be the destruction of enemy forces, the guarding of the sea lanes and the covering of amphibian assaults, supporting shore operations when possible. But if the principles of what should be done remain unchanged the ways of doing it have had to be entirely rethought—once with the coming of air power and again when the implications of the atom bomb shook the bottom out of the old strategy.

Mountbatten conceived the new navy as a compact and integrated organization of task groups built round the central core of the air power of the carrier, which will move with its escort of guided-missile ships and cruisers.

This is the master idea, and it was against this that the anti-carrier lobby, so vociferous two years ago, sighted its heaviest guns. The carrier, it was said and is said, is no safer against the bomb than anything else; it is, indeed, more vulnerable, being liable to quick detection and easy destruction. To this the navy replies that, given early warning, the power of dispersal of these fast modern ships makes the navy the one force which has a chance of survival as a fighting unit if attacked by wholesale nuclear bombardment. With its latest weapons, projected or actual; its guided missiles; its much-improved warning systems and with, above all, its aircraft such as the new long-range strike model, the NA39, which will carry the atomic bomb, the task group, say its sponsors, will be fully capable of defending itself at sea and of hitting back.

These mobile, self-contained groups will be as efficient in a global war as they would be in a preventive sortie, such as the United States 6th Fleet demonstration in the Near East last April; a small war such as that in Korea, or in operations such as those found necessary in Suez.

Because atomic action might make shore bases impracticable and because, anyway, Mountbatten has drastically reduced the number of our naval bases all round the world, it is intended that the Task Group Navy should live "on its own fat." New fuels and, later, nuclear powered submarines such as the Nautilus in America and our own nuclear submersible Dreadnought—still at the design stage—will allow the Fleet Train or Afloat Support of maintenance and supply ships to give the fleet of the future a range undreamed of a few years ago.

Fleets, especially those which have to be constructed with developing weapons for speculative rôles, are not built in a year or even in half a decade. It will not be till 1965 that the modern navy will take definite shape. Its units will have strange titles and unfamiliar appliances.

The nuclear submarine might still not be a reality, but there will be those like the Explorer and Excalibur, burning the new high-test peroxide which will be capable of high underwater speeds and great endurance. There will be cruisers of the new Tiger class with fully automatic six-inch and three-inch guns, secret control equipment and the hermetic structure which atomic warfare makes necessary. Guided missile ships of the fleet escort will be armed with the British sea-to-air missile, Sea Slug, which was successfully tested this summer, and will be able to engage the fastest and highest flying aircraft. There will be fully air conditioned anti-submarine frigates carrying new asdic equipment of immense range and accuracy. The carriers themselves will be fitted with three British inventions—the angled flight deck, the steam catapult and the revolutionary mirror landing device. It will, inevitably, be a very air-minded navy.

In the air-sea controversy which has bedevilled service debates in Parliament for years and which had led to much public bickering, Mountbatten has taken no part, although his position is well known. He is an "air" man, and would hardly be where he is if he were not. It is said that Mountbatten has long had his eyes on Coastal Command and has even suggested a name for its marriage with the Fleet Air Arm—Maritime Command.

As a serving officer, the First Sea Lord must keep silent, but those who wish him less than well or are nervous of his supposed aspirations are convinced that his mania for cohesion will lead him to use all his great influence to bring about the fusion.

If that is so, Mountbatten is not the only one. In April this year it was announced that the Defence Minister had set up an "integration committee" to examine the possibilities of joining the three services under a single administration. And last month the Prime Minister, while denying that there was any intention of merging the three services into a single defence force, said in the Commons that new measures for co-ordination in command structure and central administration were being considered.

This suggests that there might yet be a Supremo. No one in the navy from the lower deck upwards has any doubt as to the best man for that post. In the light of character and achievement it is reasonable to imagine that the First Sea Lord is not racked with doubts himself.

THE END

EARL MOUNTBATTEN of BURMA introduces JOHN BULL'S DRAMATIC NEW SERIES

BEACH reconnaissance—what does this phrase conjure up to the average man? I think very little, and yet in the last war, under the deliberately misleading title of Combined Operations Pilotage Parties (COPPS) numbers of very gallant men set out on surveys of the actual beaches on which we subsequently made our landings. None of the great amphibious operations of the last war could have been carried out, with such efficiency and skill, without the vital information that the COPPs provided.

The Secret Invaders is the story of how the COPPs were trained, and how they carried out the reconnaissance of enemy beaches on which we wished to land, which were normally actively held by the enemy, making the task extremely hazardous. It tells, in particular, the story of Nigel Willmott (now a Captain Royal Navy with the D.S.O., D.S.C. and two bars and at present a member of the naval staff in the Admiralty), who originated the idea, and organized, trained and led many of these very gallant parties.

During the last four years of the war in Combined Operations, and in South East Asia, I had unrivalled knowledge of the COPP parties and I developed a deep admiration for their particular form of courage "in cold blood."

The work of the COPPs was always kept completely secret in war; and I am therefore delighted that their unobtrusive valour has at last been set down in a book, to which I am honoured to write this short foreword as a small tribute to so many gallant officers and men.

Mountbatten of Burma

Swiftly they paddled towards the enemy coast . . . one of the superb illustrations by Zelinski

'THE SECRET INVADERS' BEGINS NEXT WEEK

Fabrics that smooth your wash-day

by NORMAN PHILLIPS

Revolutionary clothes are eliminating the need to iron. Now the problem is to show housewives that it isn't just a trick

This dress, used by Roy Conwell during his demonstrations, has been washed publicly 148 times without losing its original freshness

ROY MACDONALD CONWELL, a conventional Manchester business man, lives with his wife and young son in suburban Prestbury. One Friday about a year ago, Conwell came home from his office and took a child's frock from his briefcase.

For the remainder of the week-end he was in and out of the kitchen repeatedly washing, wringing and drying the little dress.

Mrs. Conwell watched with the tolerant air of any woman who has seen her husband pass through the stage of washing his own non-iron shirts. Her expression changed when she examined the washed frock. It was made of rayon. It had been wrung out instead of drip-dried—yet it was crisp and fresh without ever having been ironed.

The secret was not Conwell's skill as a laundryman, but the finish given to the dress material. His employers spent more than £500,000 on research alone so that rayon and linen could share with cotton the finish known to housewives as minimum-iron.

Millions of pounds have been spent by Britain's textile industry in developing minimum-iron finishes under the slogans "no-iron," "non-iron," "ironless," "drip-dry," "smooth-drying" or "wash and wear." The slogans were first introduced on cotton dress materials, but the most dramatic changes concern men's shirts.

In March, 1956, a survey by the magazine *Style For Men* showed that the percentage of non-iron shirts sold was negligible. In March, 1957, nearly one in four shirts sold was non-iron. A more recent survey, by the magazine *Men's Wear*, shows that sixty-five to eighty per cent of advance orders for shirts specify non-iron fabrics.

Roger Malcolm Lee, chairman of the Calico Printers' Association, the firm which produced the first non-iron shirt, says: "The success of this fabric strained our production resources."

In women's dress materials, the trend towards finishes that require little or no ironing is expected to reach the stage next spring when half the dress cottons sold will be non-iron.

The finishes were perfected at a critical time for Lancashire. Shrinking export markets threatened the cotton industry, and cotton and rayon were losing ground to nylon and Terylene. In the past year the demand for non-iron yarn and cloth has swollen manufacturers' order books.

In the linen trade Conwell expects that the minimum-iron finish will add a million dollars a year to American sales.

Women's dress materials and men's shirts have been joined by a cotton suiting, crease resistant and drip-drying, that only needs the iron to insert trouser creases. Not far in the future are cotton sheets and pillowcases that will require no ironing.

Ironing, however, will not become a lost art, nor will the hand-iron join the curling-tongs in the museum of outdated household appliances. "The touch of an iron," Conwell says, "slicks up even the best finish just that little bit more. What we have done is to eliminate the *need* to iron."

Eight-year-old twins Lesley and Teresa Scoble set a poser: who wears the drip-dried dress? Three experts and a housewife were unsure, but Lesley (left) has the unironed dress

Conwell's problem, as a merchandising director for Tootal Broadhurst Lee, is to persuade merchants and housewives that not only do the new finishes cut down ironing chores on rayon and linen as well as on cotton, but that the fabrics can also be wrung out, so that they do not drip as they dry.

For a demonstration at a London fashion show Conwell ordered a pair of old-fashioned galvanized washtubs, one for washing and the other for rinsing. To speed up the demonstration, he converted an ordinary steel cupboard into a drying cabinet by installing an electric heater.

The master of ceremonies at the fashion show tossed a spotless, brand-new minimum-iron frock into one of the tubs. As it sank beneath the suds he invited anyone in the audience to come forward and wash the garment as thoroughly as they liked.

None of the women present accepted the challenge, but a burly Australian volunteered. He laundered the dress like an army shirt, twisting it clumsily in the soapy water and finally wringing it like a dish-rag.

The dress was placed in the drying cupboard and, at the end of the show, it was taken out dry, clean and free of wrinkles, as if it had just been pressed.

Conwell wasn't satisfied with this demonstration. It looked so successful that he was sure that some customers would suspect a conjuring trick in which a second, freshly ironed, dress had been secreted inside the cabinet.

His doubts increased when the B.B.C. asked him to repeat the performance in a television broadcast from the National Fabric Fair. The producer made one stipulation—the dress had to be washed and dried within fifteen minutes.

At the risk of reducing the dress to a charred fragment, additional heating elements were

Continued on page 30

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

THE FEARFUL MAN

by ***NORAH BURKE***

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN BERRY

He could see no danger; it was just another journey into the jungle. Yet his wife was sharpening the knife and talking of tigers . . .

Har Singh had thought of several reasons why he should not go, but he stepped out manfully, the family knife at the ready

WHEN the foreman of road coolies had to report on the men in his charge, he said to the babu who was writing the letter: "Har Singh is a good worker, a diligent and honest fellow, but I do not think he should be put to road work in the jungle, he is so nervous and full of fear"; so the babu entered it as: "Har Singh, a good worker but a fearful man."

Gentle, timid Har Singh was also a very poor man, and he had a wife and several children to support. He loved them all, no matter how many there were, and his firm wish was to fill their bellies as often as possible, and to give them many yards of snow-white cotton for cool clothing in this hot land of India. He wanted also bangles and such for his wife and daughters, so that when they moved there would be a dazzle of musical glass.

But all these things were far beyond his means. Therefore his own private dream for himself of a ramshackle bicycle, tied with string, on which to clatter to work, scarcely ever troubled him because it was useless to think about it.

The family lived in a hut which they had made themselves on the outskirts of the city. They used banana leaves and cardboard and old tins which they cut and flattened. Every monsoon the cardboard melted, and the home had to be patched.

But it was a real home. The earth floor was worked smooth as sandalwood by bare feet, and even when there was no food in the place it held a pleasant smell of Indian cooking. Delightful spices like turmeric and garlic remained there—mustard, chillies, poppy seed, cardamom—so that, when they were eating their usual unflavoured meals of lentils and chupatty, they could remember all these other things that sting the tongue.

When the contractor for whom Har Singh worked was choosing his gangs for the new road through the Bhindwara jungle, he read the reports on his men, and it seemed to him that a good worker and a fearful man would be just right for the job. Man-eaters and pythons would mean nothing to such a fellow. He therefore put that name down among two hundred others, and thus set Har Singh off towards the arms of a Himalayan black bear, one of the most dangerous animals in the forest.

Thus this dreamy Bengali, who loved crowds and colour and noise, found himself on the Bhindwara job. To begin with he was not in the least alarmed, because fortunately he had no imagination. Indeed, once at home when some newly hatched chicks had been disappearing from the hut in which family and livestock all dwelt together, and it was decided that there must be a pair of cobras in the roof—made of grass, that year—Har Singh had torn the thatch

A little before dawn, Har Singh answered his wife's call. He lay shivering in the dew. "What has happened?" she gasped. "I'm dead," Har Singh replied simply

off with his bare hands to find them. It is true that, when the first snake showed itself, he had run away; but then, after both were killed, he came back and prodded them with sticks.

Work on the new road began at once, and soon was in heavy jungle where tiger tracks were dried hard in the clay beside the rivers. Har Singh cut a whole track out with his knife and took it back to show his family. Then they put it on the roof among other stones to help hold the house down in case there should be wind. . . .

Presently Har Singh was working too far from home to return, so his family followed him into the wilderness, as other families did also, and they set up house again in movable villages of grass and bamboo taken easily from the jungle right at hand.

They fed upon venison and fish burned in ashes, picked out and eaten blazing hot, ash and all, with sometimes a live spark clinging to the meat. Pink-yellow *bher* berries grew at the door.

"Why, it is easy to be a *jungli*," smiled Har Singh when he stood in his sweet-smelling new grass house and sucked fingers cut by grass-blades. "How simple it is to make a home in the forest! Now, a little millet and sugar cane, a little mustard, gram and rice, a gourd to grow on the roof, and we should have everything we could want."

But when Har Singh spoke thus to his work-mates, they teased him about Forest Guards and Rangers and poaching, they asked if he had a permit to cut government grass, and frightened him with talk of fines.

Of course, during work hours, there was more chatter and cigarettes than ring of pickaxe on rock; but the coolies did labour as well as laze, and the road went on. It cut through forest and across grassland—wide natural *maidans* where spotted deer and nilgai grazed, and tigers and panthers came for them, though not by day-light. The road crossed rivers where crocodiles slept, and began to climb into the Himalayan foothills, among oak trees rather than bamboo and sal.

Har Singh saw many tracks of animals, but he had no notion what they were. Neither did he recognize the different sounds he heard. At the beginning, one screech from paroquet or peacock, one howl from jackals was enough to blanch his heart; but when he discovered that these terrifying cries need not alarm him, he did not worry about tigers either.

For a time nothing happened to change his idea of the jungle as a pleasant place. He was not afraid because, except for birds and monkeys, he saw no wild creatures, and so he never thought about them. Also, he was always with others, never alone.

Then one day he found a great treasure in the jungle, and hid it to come back for it later by himself after dark. It was an empty kerosene oil tin in perfect condition.

Surveyors had passed that way and, though such a useful thing as a big tin was always claimed, this one had somehow got dropped and forgotten. It was not even rusty.

Har Singh had gone aside from the others to find a waterfall which he could hear. It was out of sight beneath ferns, in a place of pure smells and green shadows and one small scarlet bird, and there, suddenly, he saw the tin. It returned the sun into his eyes as if it were a slab of silver.

Imagine! Perfect. It could be used as it was to hold such things as water, oil, grain; or, if opened, it would tile a square yard or more of roof for at least two seasons. How pleased his wife would be! She would know its best use. Har Singh admired and loved her, and trusted her wisdom. She knew how to lay out their money, and she would know just what to do with the tin.

He glanced round uneasily to see if anyone had observed his find and might be disposed to argue possession. He could, of course, hear the shout and drill of roadwork in progress, but there was no one actually in sight.

Where could he hide his treasure to come back for it after dark? There was a thorn thicket nearby, and a runway going into it. Just the place. His town eyes did not see marks in the dust, nor black hairs on the thorn. In the tumble of rock at this place there must be caves in which bears were probably sleeping the day through. He did not notice anything. It meant nothing to him that branches of the oak trees round about were smashed, though still putting forth leaf, by heavy bodies that had wanted the acorns.

When the coolies knocked off that evening, Har Singh went back with them to camp. His wife had got plenty of chupatties cooked ready for the family, and curry and rice as well, so they all filled themselves with this good food, and wiped up the green-yellow hot juices with bits of chupatty.

Har Singh felt strengthened to fetch the tin. "I shall go for it after dark," he told his wife. "If we can get it back here into the home, no one can say it is not ours."

It was almost night already.

"I will sharpen your knife," planned his wife.

"My knife?"

"In case you meet a tiger."

"A tiger?"

"Or a panther."

"Perhaps," he suggested, "I could bring the tin home in daylight tomorrow."

"By that time someone else may have got it."

His wife fetched out the family knife. It was long and thin, and sharp both sides. Years ago, when he was bargaining for it, the other man had argued: "You are getting it dirt-cheap because it is a murder-knife. It was used to kill a woman in Darjeeling, once. . . ."

Har Singh's wife chose a stone. She took two drops of oil, and began to whet the blades both sides until it sang, when she tested it gingerly on one thumb. These operations Har Singh watched in horrified silence.

At once it was time for him to leave. By then he had thought of several reasons why not to go, but he remembered the illness of his third little son last monsoon, and the rain dripping on to the charpoy where the child lay in raging fever, and nothing with which to patch the roof, so he took the knife and set out.

There was moonlight like dark clear water in which he could see well, and he stepped out manfully, knife at the ready. Behind him, the lights of camp dwindled and went out.

He was alone in the jungle. Wind moved big leaves here and there as if something walked in the bushes beside him. Moths jigged past. He began to think about tigers.

As he walked, Har Singh's eyes grew larger and larger, his poor heart had a job to keep going, and once, when an owl swooped and hooted right by his head, he nearly jumped out of his skin, so that, when he heard what sounded like wood-sawing just ahead of him, his whole spirit ran in friendliness towards these other human souls. Dacoits? Poachers? Robbers? It didn't matter, so long as they were men.

But as he hurried towards his fellow creatures in this dreadful wilderness, he found no men there. Instead, a lithe, spotted shape jumped up from the road where it had been sitting calling, and lolloped off gracefully among the trees.

Poor Har Singh was even more frightened than the panther which he had disturbed. He faltered on. But it was not far now, and soon he had pulled the tin out of its hiding place. Carrying it in his left hand, and the knife in his right, he turned for home.

As he did so, there came a crumpling sound of twigs and leaves, and a huge shaggy black shape lumped into sight among the thorns. Har Singh saw the white chest and long snout of a bear.

"Arrrgh . . ." came his mortal scream.

Many jungle animals might have plunged away from this yell and gone bucketing off into the undergrowth in fright. But bears are different, and will often deliberately seek out a human voice in order to maul the owner. This one reared up with a grunt to get at the man's face.

Har Singh ran for his life, but he was soon into thorn bushes and caught. He jerked round to face his attacker. The tin was still in his

Continued on page 29

He chases sales at full throttle

by PETER JACKSON

Jock West travels the world on the motor-cycles that he sells. His racing approach has brought orders—and a police threat at pistol point

JOCK WEST, sales director of a British motor-cycle company, was riding one of his firm's export models to San Sebastian, Spain, in September, 1954, when he met a traffic hold-up on a mountain road through the Pyrenees. He made his way to the head of a long line of traffic to find that a river was in flood and had swept away the bridge.

While car and truck drivers hooted in frustration, West turned his motor-cycle off the road and headed into the mountains along the rocky bank of the river.

He bumped and slithered along a narrowing valley for half an hour until he reached a wooden footbridge. This was intact, spanning the swollen river where it swept through a deep gorge. West crossed the river and rode down a goat path which eventually returned him to the main road. He continued his journey to San Sebastian, and kept his appointment with a motor-cycle dealer there that afternoon.

"The fact that I arrived by a so-called impassable route was the best demonstration I could make," says West, a bulky, heavily-eyebrowed former star of the Isle of Man Tourist Trophy races. As a world-wide salesman of motor-cycles, he prefers to do his travelling on one.

When the Spanish dealer discovered how West had by-passed the wrecked bridge, he dubbed the machine "a mechanical mule." "It's not a bad description," says West, "and could explain why British motor-cycles are so popular in the toughest parts of the world."

British manufacturers exported 58,850 machines, worth £7,300,000, last year. A further £4 million worth has been sold abroad already this year. At least six out of ten of the A.J.S. and Matchless machines produced by West's company, Associated Motor Cycles, Ltd., are sent to overseas customers.

They are used to round up cattle in Australia and to collect rubber in Malaya. An American uranium prospector uses one of West's models to pull his one-man caravan about the Rockies. Town councils in Japan and Poland use British motor-cycles to keep their rates and taxes down; they import the machines and run a municipal lottery on the results of races that they sponsor every Sunday afternoon.

A Canadian recently came over to England to collect a motor-cycle for a ten thousand mile tour of Europe. West handed over the machine at the factory gate, and prepared to wave the tourist on his way.

"There's just one thing before I leave," said the Canadian. "Can you teach me how to ride one of these things?"

During December, 1955, West went to Damascus to investigate the servicing and repairs of motor-cycles that he had supplied to the Syrian Army. He found that the Middle Eastern mechanic's approach to maintenance work was cheerfully haphazard.

Spare parts were left to rust in odd corners, and West once threw a technical demonstration into complete confusion by calling for a clean piece of rag.

"Yet they manage to keep their machines going," he says, "and to put them to full use." In one Damascus street, he was overtaken by another motor-cycle, carrying three Arabs and a camel pannier, with a sidecar containing five women alongside, and a well-laden handcart tied on behind.

At the start of a European sales plane. On one trip to Paris, he

In 1952 West was invited to demonstrate his machine to the Dutch police. When a car passed him at 60 m.p.h. he was expected to start his machine and overtake the car within one mile. West set off after the car, drew level with about a hundred yards to spare, and then began to cut in front to bring the car to a halt. It was then that a large dog ran in West's path.

Swerving to avoid it, he mounted a grass verge and bounced over several mounds of gravel before regaining the highway and stopping his machine.

"After that," says West, "the Dutch cancelled their usual braking and cross-country tests." Despite strong international competition he got a £75,000 order for five hundred motor-cycles.

SOME of West's demonstrations are deliberately spectacular. In France in 1948 he joined two racing motor-cyclists, Les Graham and Georges Monneret, in an attack on several time and distance records at a track outside Paris.

West rode for the first hour of a joint five-hour attempt and when ready for the fourth stage he put on tinted goggles to filter the afternoon sun. On the first lap the elastic broke.

He fumbled to fix the goggles while carrying on, but they failed again and he had to tear them off. Continuing to ride for an hour at top speed without goggles, he closed his eyes while he counted up to fifteen along the straight sections of each 50-second lap and opened them in time for the bends. He finished with badly bloodshot eyes.

"The missing goggles were an unexpected part of our stunt," says West. "But my battered

West in a Belgian road race. During a T.T. practice run, his handlebars snapped when he was riding at 100 m.p.h. "It was a case of hanging on and hoping," he says

tour, West takes his motor-cycle aboard a Channel ferry travelled with his dinner suit under his riding clothes

When a Russian mission visited British factories, West (left) showed some of the women members round a motor-cycle works

appearance gave me every excuse for telling everyone how our machines broke eighteen world records in one day."

Shortly afterwards West tried out one of his factory team's brand-new machines before the Dutch Grand Prix at Assen. He rode into the first bend at full speed and was thrown on to the track as the brakes jammed.

"It was particularly embarrassing," he says, "because I landed at the feet of our close rivals, the Norton team, as they posed for press photographs. My headlong arrival in the group was not the sort of publicity I usually aim to get from my riders."

West received one unexpected order after an Eastern prince saw a Hollywood film in which the hero received a ticker-tape reception on his return from the war. The prince was impressed by the outrider escort of motor-cycles and decided to mechanize his bodyguard: he bought twenty machines from West's firm. When delivery was made, the prince became a motor-cycle enthusiast himself and ordered an extra machine.

"There aren't many out-rider escorts," says West, "which surround a V.I.P. on another motor-cycle."

About a year ago, a Hungarian living in Britain bought a motor-cycle and sent it to his son in Budapest. "It proved a useful gift," says West. "The son fought the Russians in the revolution and finally escaped by riding his motor-cycle all the way to England."

West claims to have brought about the downfall of President Peron a few months before the Argentinian revolutionaries got to work. Peron, a keen motor-cyclist, bought a £250 model from West and sent his private plane to collect it. The dictator was impressed by the appearance of the British machine on its arrival, but underestimated its power. He lost control during his first ride on it and was thrown over the handlebars.

When West visited an Arctic unit of the Swedish Army in 1955, he saw a "phantom" motor-cycle patrol using his firm's models. The riders were dressed from head to foot in white, their white-painted machines moving silently through a snow-bound forest and setting up waves of snow as they twisted between the trees. West learned that the snow muffled any engine noise and the spectacular cornering came from the four-foot long skis fitted on either side of the machines. He eagerly accepted an invitation to try out a ski motor-cycle and promptly threw it into a sharp turn. A few seconds later, his hosts were helping him from the bottom of a ditch.

"You may know how to ride a motor-cycle," said a young lieutenant, "but you have no idea of ski-ing."

WEST returned to England in time for a blizzard which swept across Kent. He fitted skis to his own machine and practised in a quiet country lane near his home until he had mastered the art of ski-riding. His pleasure was cut short when a woman passer-by suggested that any motor-cyclist who had to resort to such elaborate measures to keep his balance was not safe to be on the road at all.

Soon afterwards West was asked to supply a ski-machine to a Mexican who planned to climb an extinct volcano on a motor-cycle. "The order was dispatched," says West, "but I never heard if the Mexican ever did get to the top."

Jock West, who is forty-eight, started motor-cycle racing as a youth. He won the Ulster Grand Prix in 1937 and again in 1938, the second time setting up a world record for a motor-cycle road race with an average speed of 93.98 m.p.h.

Practising for the 1947 T.T. in the Isle of Man, he was riding at 100 m.p.h. when his handlebars snapped at the approach to the Hawthorns, a series of three bumpy, right-hand bends. West realized that it was too late to pull out, and rode through the bends one-handed. "It was a case of hanging on and hoping the bike would know the way."

He emerged from the Hawthorns safely, found that he could still operate the dangling throttle and continued one-handed around the course for another thirty miles.

West gave up racing soon after his postwar sales appointment, but almost returned to the sport when one of his firm's team broke a leg on the eve of the 1950 T.T. West arrived for the start wearing his old leathers and helmet, but his entry was refused on the grounds that the veteran of twenty-seven years' motor-cycling "lacked practice."

His racing experience brought trouble when he was delayed at a road junction in southern France two years ago. He kept edging forward from the queue of traffic in his impatience to make a rolling start as soon as the signal to move on was given. These tactics so infuriated the gendarme on duty that he drew his revolver and threatened to shoot at the restless motor-cyclist.

West retired to the rear of the procession and followed on sedately when the line of traffic began to move. "You don't jump the starter's gun," he says, "when it's being pointed at your head."

West had an uncertain reception when, after riding from London to the South Coast and taking an air ferry across the Channel, he rode on his motor-cycle up to the entrance of a Paris hotel where an association of French dealers was holding its annual dinner. The commissionaire refused to believe that the travel-stained figure in riding boots, nylon flying suit and goggles was fit to join the elegant gathering.

"I had to strip off in the street and reveal my dinner jacket before he would let me in," says West. "Once inside, of course, I was different from my old French friends only in that I was the one man in the place with a cloakroom ticket for a crash helmet." THE END

They could be after love . . . or money. Naturally, we must see that they made the proper choice

RAFFLES and the Coffee Queens

by ***BARRY PEROWNE***

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWIN PHILLIPS

THE gaslamps were shining whitely down Fleet Street when Raffles and I alighted from a hansom outside Coster John's Coffee Room. Adelphi Brown was behind the counter, watching the brass-bound coffee-roaster rotate slowly over a blue flame. Her pretty hair shone russet. She was twenty-one, the daughter of a journalist called Byron Brown, who had left behind him nothing but a good name.

"Good evening, Adelphi," Raffles said.

She looked up. "Why, Mr. Raffles and Mr. Manders!" she exclaimed. She wore a dress the hue of *café-au-lait* and a frilled, cream-coloured apron. Her eyes were very candid and warm and straightforward. "I haven't seen you for ages."

"To our shame, Adelphi," Raffles said. "We seldom get down this way nowadays, because our friend Manders here has to some extent deserted the world of journalism."

I felt myself colour. Not for worlds would I have had Adelphi Brown know that the reason I had turned renegade to journalism had been to join Raffles in a life of crime.

"Tell us, Adelphi," Raffles said, as she began to prepare our coffee in a small copper jug with a long handle. "How are things going with you? Honestly, now."

"You always ask me that in such an earnest way," she said, smiling. "Things are going fine with me. I do well. Everybody in Fleet Street comes here."

"Because of you, Adelphi," Raffles said.

"Because they respected my father," she corrected. "Now drink your coffee while it's hot. Here comes some custom."

A couple of journalists walked in. They were putting their heads together about the chances of pumping up some recent jewel robberies—nothing to do with Raffles and me—into a pained outcry against police laxness. We yielded the small counter to them and carried our coffee to a table. Raffles offered me his cigarette case and, as we lighted Sullivans, his grey eyes studied Adelphi Brown.

"You know, Bunny," he said slowly, "if I were a big enough scoundrel to ask a girl to marry a scoundrel such as I am, I think I'd long ago have. . . ." He shrugged slightly. "Oh, well, it'll be a very lucky man who gets Adelphi Brown. She's the most beautiful, lovable, talented girl currently dispensing coffee in the whole length and breadth of London."

"Oh, come, Raffles," a voice said, "that's a pretty steep claim."

We looked up. A third man who had come in paused at our table. Tall, thirtyish, he was an actor chap called Alphonse Bird. He had a profile that had been a good deal murmured about by theatre-going ladies, and he carried it as though he were fully conscious of its fatal elegance. "Have you seen Prudence Bailey," he demanded, "at the Baghdad Coffee Divan?"

"Never been in the place," Raffles said. "Nevertheless"—he snapped his fingers—"so much for Prudence Bailey."

"I defy you to snap your fingers," the actor said hotly, "once you've seen Prudence."

"Done," Raffles said. "Allow us to drink our coffee in relative peace, and take leave of Adelphi; then we'll come with you to your Baghdad shambles."

In a four-wheeler the three of us rode through the sultry summer night to Leicester Square. The Baghdad was on the first floor of a building across from the gas-flaring Byzantine splendour of the Alhambra Music Hall. We sat on leather objects at round, brass-topped tables about a foot high.

"Here she comes," Bird said, arranging his profile.

The girl approaching us wore a kind of vaguely oriental costume which, I was obliged to admit to myself, charmingly became her. She was dark-eyed, indisputably lovely, but her tone to Alphonse Bird was distant, even cold, as though she shared my own lack of enthusiasm for the man.

"Good evening, Mr. Bird," she said. "Turkish coffee?"

"Prudence," Bird said reproachfully, "please smile for my friends. Do, Prue!"

She gave Raffles and myself a delightful smile, from which, however, she very justifiably excluded Alphonse. But the actor looked at us complacently as she went off. "Well?" he said. "There goes the girl who, *I* maintain, is the most beautiful, lovable, talented girl currently dispensing coffee anywhere in London. Raffles, I defy you to snap your fingers at her."

"Nothing could induce me to do so," Raffles said. "But you must grant——"

"What's the pow-wow?" a voice interrupted.

The man who had joined us was about forty. He wore evening dress and a monocle, and had an air of slightly dissipated distinction. His name was Charles Chastayne.

"My dear fellows," he said, on hearing the subject of the argument, "beyond doubt the most charming girl currently dispensing coffee in London is Mayday Pennington, at the Ottoman Coffee Oasis, upstairs in Glasshouse Street. Look here, we'll just pop round there and settle the whole controversy."

The four of us rode to Glasshouse Street. From a sunken basin in the centre of a tiled floor strewn with rugs, at the Ottoman Coffee Oasis, rose the silvery plume of a small fountain. Chastayne led us to a group of small ottomans set about a corner table of Lebanon cedar.

"Here she is," he said, as we sat down, and he caused his monocle to glimmer benignly at the girl who

Continued on page 23

After Lee and Adelphi had left the hansom, Raffles and I held open the doors for them. They seemed not to see us as they walked past . . .

A fortune among our souvenirs

by ROY HILL

Millions of pounds are spent annually on keepsakes. For a few shillings tourists can buy a duke's ashtray—or Tower Bridge

WHEN a Stratford-on-Avon watchmaker, Thomas Sharp, heard that a neighbour had cut down a mulberry tree planted by William Shakespeare, he bought a part of the tree, fashioned the wood into trinket boxes, engraved each box with a portrait of Shakespeare, and started a souvenir industry in Britain which now makes about £50,000 a year from visitors to Stratford alone.

Before he died in 1799, Sharp swore an affidavit that every souvenir he had sold was genuinely hewn from the Bard's own tree. Today, few of the souvenirs sold in Britain are made from local materials. Most of them are manufactured as sidelines by hundreds of firms which last year exported "fancy goods"—as they are officially called—worth £70 million.

A chromium-plated teaspoon selling for ninepence in the stores fetches four times as much when fitted with the crest of a town and presented as a souvenir.

"Spoons," says a dealer, "are the best-selling souvenir line. Some women collect them like stamps."

Strictly, it is illegal to reproduce coats of arms and crests without permission from the patentees. But unapproved dies of town crests have been used for so long without complaint that the ancient Court of Chivalry, acknowledging that crested goods were "dear to the hearts of souvenir hunters and tourists, Americans and others, as well as seaside visitors," decreed that the court should not now intervene.

The popular price of a souvenir is 5s. When a London firm found that gilt models of Tower Bridge and the Palace of Westminster were classified as "ornaments" (purchase tax sixty per cent) if they were mounted on simple alabaster bases, the firm remounted some of the models on small dishes—so that they became "table hollow-ware," taxed at only fifteen per cent. But if the same dishes were provided with grooves to hold cigarettes they would be "smokers' requisites," and once again taxable at sixty per cent.

Some souvenir lines are adaptable for export. A Birmingham firm heard that trays engraved with a map of Britain were popular in San Francisco. The firm geared production to 250,000 trays a year—and sold them all. Souvenir sugar bowls fitted with tongs were unsaleable in the United States because sugar there is wrapped; but when the bowls were renamed "cocktail servers," for storing cherries or sliced fruit, they sold well. Small glass dishes with silvered rims, which Britons buy in thousands as butter dishes, sell in America as coasters, on which to stand wine glasses.

Unadaptable, specialist souvenirs are rare. A shopkeeper who brought back from Paris a pencil fitted with a lens which showed a girl posing was unable to persuade a British firm to make the pencils—even with views of London in place of the nude.

A plastic and gilt statuette of Eros (12s. 6d.) is in demand in London. So are dolls in the costume of Scots Guards, Beefeaters, London policemen or Canadian Mounties. The makers, a North Wales firm, sold £11,000 worth of the dolls in three months this year.

In a few places "original" souvenir crafts survive. At Whitby three craftsmen make souvenir jewellery from jet. But when the youngest of them dies—he is now forty-nine—the craft will probably die with him.

On the Lizard peninsula, in Cornwall, fifty people fashion coloured serpentine rock, found near the Lizard, into lighthouse lamps, sundial vases, egg cups, ashtrays and polished dishes.

A PLYMOUTH firm made ashtrays from H.M.S. Hood's quarterdeck gangway, which was left behind at Devonport Dockyard when the battle-cruiser sailed to her death in 1941. Another firm makes a huge range of articles—umbrella stands to match-barrels—from the teak decking of scrapped ships. The firm uses four hundred tons of teak a year.

The future seems bright for "Devon violet scent from Teignmouth." Last year a Devonshire firm used more than a thousand gallons of alcohol, blended with violet oil, to make the scent, which is sold in opal and ceramic jars, pixie bottles, poodle bottles, windmills and bottles clothed in wickerwork jackets.

The value of a souvenir cannot be measured in cash. A London retailer sent to an address in the U.S.A. some inch-long imitation cigars designed to fit a plaster figure, discreetly called "the smoking statesman." He received in return a letter of acknowledgment saying that the statuette—of Winston Churchill—was "once again complete, and looks natural indeed." The letter was headed: "From the office of General Eisenhower."

The Countess of Leicester makes her own souvenir pottery in a converted laundry at Holkham Hall, her eighteenth-century home in Norfolk. At Woburn Abbey, the home of the Duke of Bedford, 224,000 visitors last year spent £10,000 on souvenirs ranging from crested ashtrays to scarf rings made from the horns of the Duke's Père David deer, and brooches decorated with feathers from the pheasants in his park. Members of women's institutes are his best customers.

Generally, Americans visiting Britain on fixed—and often pre-paid—budgets are not lavish spenders. The sixteenth-century Old Curiosity Shop in London is crammed with antiques, mementoes and souvenirs of Charles Dickens, from rare first editions to toby jugs of Mr. Pickwick. "Recently," says Bernard Lewis, who runs the shop with his brother, "a score of Americans on a tour crowded into the shop. They spent eight shillings." THE END

A visitor to John McGing's London shop selects a toby jug. From another London shop an American regularly buys horse brasses to sell in his Chicago coffee bar

Three survivors, Joe Binks, Harry Leech and Arthur Bell, walked behind the carriages carrying the dead from Beauvais to Boulogne

THE MILLIONTH CHANCE • 2

by JAMES LEASOR

Marooned in an inferno

With a giant roar, the gas caught fire. Flames three hundred feet high swathed the crashed airship. Inside, trapped, there were fifty-four men

STRUGGLING for height, the R 101 headed south from Cardington, Bedfordshire, at a laborious twenty-five miles an hour, the rising wind drumming on the fabric of her vast envelope. The weather was worsening every minute, and she was rolling more than on any previous flight. She had never been out in a storm before.

However, although the weather on that Saturday night of October 4, 1930, was far from ideal for flying and although, as the airship neared London, her height of not much more than six hundred feet was lower than might have been wished, there was little anxiety on board. Lord Thomson, the Air Minister, had said of the R 101: "She is as safe as a house—except for the millionth chance."

The six passengers, who included Lord Thomson and Sir Sefton Brancker, the Director of Civil Aviation, were pathfinders—the pioneers of an Imperial air route that would make Egypt a two-day journey from Britain and the final destination, India, a five-day journey.

The R 101 had been planned as the first of six airships that would operate the route. Nothing so huge had ever flown before. Manned by a crew of forty-eight and as large as an ocean liner—777 feet long and 132 feet wide—she had taken six years to build and cost more than £1 million.

On this, her maiden voyage, were centred the hopes of her country in an age when it was thought that the future of air travel lay in craft that were lighter than air.

In the little galley, set behind the passengers' quarters and reached by a hazardous journey along a catwalk only nine inches wide, "Ernie" Savidge, the chief steward, was preparing the evening meal. And up in the airship's wireless cabin, where the clock hands pointed to 8.21, the operator tapped out: "Over London. All well. Moderate rain. Base of low clouds 1,500 feet. Course now set for Paris. Intend to proceed via Paris, Tours, Toulouse and Narbonne."

At half-past nine the captain of the R 101, Flight-Lieutenant Carmichael Irwin, ordered a message to be sent to the meteorological office at Cardington, asking for a radio forecast of conditions between Paris and Marseilles with special reference to the wind forces and clouds he could expect. If the clouds were thick, the gas would cool and contract inside the gas-bags; the airship would begin to sink, and he would have to shed ballast to hold height. Such conditions could be dangerous.

After dinner, the passengers sat in the great

Despite the crash and the fire, the R 101 held its shape. And, at the tip of the enormous tail, the R.A.F. ensign still flew

white and gold lounge, looking rather lost in the chill emptiness of the place—it had been designed to accommodate a hundred people—and soon moved to the smoking-room which, being smaller, was warmer. They remarked that the airship seemed to be travelling more slowly, and this was indeed the case; she was running on only three engines.

Some miles north of London the oil pressure began to drop in the engine in a propeller car aft, and the engine was stopped while attempts were made to find the fault. Arthur Bell and Joe Binks, the two engineers in charge, crouched together by the warm, silent diesel, the storm beating on the thin cover of the car. The only way back into the airship was up an outside ladder and through a hatchway—a difficult task on a dry day for those with squeamish stomachs, and doubly dangerous in a storm when the airship was rolling heavily and the rungs were slippery with rain.

At twenty-five minutes to ten the radio operator sent out a further message: "Crossing coast in vicinity of Hastings. It is raining hard and there is a strong south-westerly wind. Gradually increasing height so as to avoid high land. Ship behaving well generally."

The ship was, in fact, behaving far from well. She was rolling and pitching to such an extent that Flight-Lieutenant Irwin had found it necessary to take in more water for ballast to steady her. Water could be pumped round the airship from tank to tank, wherever weight might be most needed. The airship would tend to rise as her fuel was consumed, so an ingenious system had been devised to catch rain, or water vapour, from the upper air. On the top of the great envelope a scoop caught the water which could then be directed through pipes and valves into the ballast tanks.

RAIN was falling more heavily as the airship shook off the lights of England and started across the Channel. The after engine was still not registering oil pressure, but now suspicion was focused on the oil-pressure gauge; perhaps it was faulty.

Harry Leech, a foreman engineer from the Royal Airship Works at Cardington, and William Gent, the airship's chief engineer, climbed down into the engine car to change it. From the window in the car, Leech suddenly looked out and was surprised to see waves breaking in white clouds of spray only a few hundred feet beneath them.

"We're pretty low," he said. "Have a look for yourself."

Gent peered through behind him. He whistled, for the water stretched as far as they could see, a deeper darkness than the night, cold, lonely, desolate. Several times, as they stared, the whole airship gave a sudden downward lurch, throwing them against each other. Then her bows came up as she rode the storm. In the tiny space of the car, where the diesel took up most of the room, and the little wire-grilled inspection lights glowed round the walls, the engineers looked at each other, sharing the same uneasy thoughts.

Up in the body of the airship, Arthur Disley, the electrician, went in to see the wireless operator in the radio cabin which adjoined the control room. From there the sea also seemed uncomfortably close and he was about to remark on the fact when Lieutenant-Commander Atherstone, the first officer, took the elevator wheel from the height coxswain.

The altimeter read nine hundred feet, and Atherstone put the airship up to one thousand feet before he handed back the wheel.

"Don't let her go below a thousand," he said.

The Channel crossing took two hours, and as the airship turned south away from the sea and flew over the low flat fields of northern France, another radio signal went back to Cardington: "Crossing French coast at Pointe de St. Quentin."

Now the wind was increasing, a fact that was only made less ominous by the news that the engine was running again in the after car, as a result of nearly three hours' work on it. The

"Read me something that won't send you to sleep"

crew were operating a watch system of three hours on and three hours off, and at eleven o'clock the watch had changed. The new watch was to be on duty until 2 a.m. on Sunday.

It was after midnight when the telephone rang in the home of Lieutenant-Colonel Vincent Richmond, the chief designer of the R 101. Homer of Cardington, a Newfoundland dog that the colonel had given his wife some time before setting out on the maiden voyage of the airship, and which they had named Homer because "he'll give us as much pleasure as the poet ever did," looked up questioningly.

Mrs. Richmond had been reading by the fire.

"Hallo," she said, lifting the receiver.

"Cardington wireless-room here," explained the voice at the other end of the line. "I thought I'd ring to give you the message we've just received from the airship. Here it is."

He began to read slowly. "To Cardington from R 101, 24.00 GMT. fifteen miles S.W. of Abbeville. Average speed, thirty-three knots. Altimeter height, 1,500 feet. Weather, intermittent rain. Cloud nimbus at five hundred feet. After an excellent supper our distinguished passengers smoked a

ENTHUSIASM—I

The most enthusiastic man in a cause is rarely chosen as a leader.

Sir Arthur Helps

final cigar and, having sighted the French coast, have now gone to bed to rest after the excitement of their leave-takings. All essential services are functioning satisfactorily. The crew have settled down to watch-keeping routine."

"That sounds all right," said Mrs. Richmond in relief. "It was good of you to ring me."

"Very glad I could do so. Now you can go to bed, Mrs. Richmond, for we're off the air here. We'll be back again tomorrow morning early, though, and I'll give you another call at six just to let you know where they are. So until then, good night."

Aboard the airship, Harry Leech washed and had a quick supper after his long tussle with the engine over the Channel. Then he sought out William Gent in the smoking-room; they were old friends. At about 1 a.m. Flight-Lieutenant Irwin came in and spoke to them.

"I'm glad you've got that engine running all right," he said. "We've got a busy day ahead, so I think I'll turn in. Good night."

"Good night, sir."

"Look here, Bill," suggested Leech as Irwin left the room. "You'll have your work cut out when we stop at Ismailia. I suggest you go to bed and get what sleep you can. I'll do the night watch."

Gent looked grateful. "That's very good of you, Harry," he said. "Please just have a look round all the engines first. Good night. See you in the morning."

Now that he was on his own, Leech leaned for a moment over the rail of the promenade deck adjoining the lounge. He peered out through the rain-pocked celluloid windows, trying to find a landmark, but it was too dark to see anything.

He walked down the empty companionway, where the floor dipped, rose and creaked with the stress of the storm. He climbed through a hatchway and down a ladder to begin his tour of the engine cars.

Even if the engineers were isolated, slung beneath the airship, at least their cars did not have the same claustrophobic atmosphere as the airship itself. For, luxurious and roomy as the lounge, smoking-room and dining-room might be, some people could never quite rid their minds of the feeling of being hemmed in. Except for the hatches leading down to the engines, and the main entrance up in the bows, there was no way out. Passengers and crew were imprisoned in the airship's vast shell until the bow doors opened again.

It was nearly half an hour before Leech's inspection was finished, and the accumulated tiredness of the day suddenly swept over him. More than anything else he longed for a smoke. Wearily he climbed the companionway to the smoking-room. It was deserted. He sat down in a wicker chair near a table on which stood a soda siphon and a tray of glasses. Their rims touched and rattled as the ship rolled. Here, alone in the centre of the airship, surrounded by five and a half million cubic feet of explosive gas, but separated from it by the thickness of a safety wall, Harry Leech put up his feet and lit a cigarette. . . .

Two o'clock and time for the watch to change.

In his bunk engineer Binks was still asleep, wrapped in his fur-lined sleeping-bag. George Short, the charge-hand engineer and engineer of the watch, came down the passage towards him.

"Wake up, Joe," he said, shaking Binks. "Everybody's on watch save you. Ginger"—Engineer Bell—"is waiting for you to relieve him."

Binks groaned and stretched. "Sorry, Shortie," he said, and stuck his feet over the edge of the bunk, groping for his trousers and canvas shoes.

"Have a cocoa before you go," Short suggested.

Binks shook his head. "No, thanks," he said. It would only delay him further, and he was late already. Short grinned, and held out the mug to him.

"If you don't drink it, I'll ram it down your throat," he promised genially. Binks gave in, gulped the steamy brew and ran down the rope walk towards the trapdoor which led to his engine car. The airship rolled as he tore open the hatchway and began to climb down the ladder to the car.

"I'll always remember that night," he said later. "I'd got on a short duffle coat with wooden toggles and loops, and the wind was so strong that it ripped the toggles right off."

The breath was blown out of his body and, with rain streaming in his face, blinding him, it was all he could do to hang on to the ladder. Mechanically he kept on going down, until he felt the welcoming warmth of the engine come up through his thin shoes. He let go his hand and dropped into the car.

Arthur Bell came round the polished side of the engine.

"You're late, Joe," he said, jerking his head towards the engine car clock. "Look at the time."

It was four minutes past two.

"Sorry, Arthur," began Binks. "I overslept. I'd still be there now if it hadn't been for Shortie."

"Well, I'm glad you're not. This engine has been going fairly well, but keep an eye on that oil pressure."

"Right-ho!"

Binks crossed to the car's small observation window and looked out. Suddenly he gave a cry of surprise. There, only a few yards away, was a dark shape sticking up through the murk and rain. It was the roof of Beauvais Cathedral, one of the loftiest and most beautiful in all Europe.

The two men stared at each other in alarm as the airship lurched, dropped and recovered again. They staggered about, groping for handholds, anxious to keep away from the hot exhaust pipes.

"What's wrong?" gasped Binks.

"Nothing," said Bell. "It's the storm." But neither believed it.

As they stood thus, glancing involuntarily at the oil gauges, their professional interest overcoming their personal feelings, the wind dropped unexpectedly. The airship was by now so close to the low ridge of hills outside Beauvais that she was sheltered by them, although no one realized it at the time.

The floor dropped again and came up, but this time the rise was slower and more gradual, as though the great ship no longer had the resilience to rise to the challenge of the rain and the storm. Then she began to fall again.

The telegraph rang for "Slow." Bell immediately throttled back the engine. And as he and Binks stared through the observation window, trying desperately to see some light, some landmark, they felt the drum of men running along the rope walks in the airship above them. The car trembled with the urgency of their footsteps.

Bell seized Binks by the shoulder, wondering if he had heard them. Then they both heard the voice of "Sky" Hunt, the chief coxswain, shout in warning: "We're down, lads! We're down!"

In the smoking-room Harry Leech was woken by a sudden jerk. The floor was heeling over at an alarming angle and the chairs began to slide towards the bows.

Hallo, we're for it, he thought.

The floor and the walls trembled as though they were in an earthquake. Then the airship stopped moving so abruptly that he was pitched out of his chair on to the floor. At that moment the lights went out, and he was alone in the darkness with chairs and tables sliding past him and crashing against the far bulkhead. The floor was at such an angle that he could not

Hold it up to the light–

not a stain–and shining white!

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walk on it, but he half-ran, half-crawled to the wall and felt along it to the door.

He tugged at the handle in a frantic effort to get out, but the handle turned uselessly in his hand and the door remained shut. The metal framework had twisted as the airship came down. As he tore at the door, kicking it with his feet, flinging his shoulders against the panels, hoping that one would give, he heard a sound like the thunder of breakers on a beach. It was the noise of five and a half million cubic feet of hydrogen taking flame.

Harry Leech was marooned in the heart of a furnace in a room without a door or window. . . .

AMONG the watchers on the ground who saw those last moments of the R 101 was Alfred Rabouille. It was his habit on most Saturdays to leave his home near Beauvais about midnight and set snares for rabbits in the nearby fields and woods.

He was taking a moment's shelter in the lee of a house when he first saw the airship, about a mile to the north.

After Rabouille had crossed the Meru road towards a plateau overlooking the town, he stopped again, looking up at the R 101. She was over the Bois des Coutumes, not more than 150 feet up and moving very slowly. The wind was forcing her towards the east.

"Suddenly there was a violent squall," he said later. "The airship dipped by the nose several times, and its fore part crashed into the north-west edge of the Bois des Coutumes. There was at once a tremendous explosion, which knocked me down.

"Soon flames rose into the sky to a great height—perhaps three hundred feet. Everything was enveloped by them. I saw human figures running about like madmen in the wreck. Then I lost my head and ran away into the woods."

As he ran he carried with him a fearful memory of the sight; the stern half of the airship sinking slowly as fire consumed it. He plunged wildly through the wood, branches lacerating his face and tearing his clothes. He heard two explosions. These renewed the horror of what he had seen. He did not stop running until he reached home and barred the door against the memory.

Then Alfred Rabouille, the man nearest to the airship as she crashed, crossed himself and went to bed. . . .

Binks and Bell stared out of their engine car in horror. Instead of a glistening silver hull, they saw the skeleton of the airship glowing red-hot. Only a few scraps of burning fabric remained in it; the rest had gone in a fury of flame that hissed and roared in the rain.

"We'd better get out of this," said Bell, turning off all the oil-fuel taps.

Binks pulled his arm. "No," he said. "Hang on."

The wind was against them, blowing down the flames from the bow to the tail, and they could not hope to survive in that inferno. Their clothes and skin would be burned off before they were half out of the car. The alternative of waiting was only slightly less grim, for sharing the engine car with them were metal drums containing thirty gallons of petrol to work the starting motor.

Flames began to lick up between the floorboards, scorching the soles of their feet. At best they had only a few moments before the petrol exploded. Then liquid came pouring down on them from above. Some streamed down Binks's face and into his mouth. He gave a cry of excitement.

"Water!"

The ballast tanks had burst within the airship—an accident which undoubtedly saved their lives.

They both seized some cleaning rags, held them up into the stream and threw them on the floor, treading out the flames.

Then, turning their backs to the wind, they climbed out of the car and jumped. They landed on all fours on the soft earth of a gentle slope.

"By going out with our backs to the fire we saved our eyesight," says Binks. "We were burned on the face and hands, though, but didn't realize this until later. The shock was so tremendous that it all seemed more like a nightmare than reality. One moment we were in the greatest airship that had ever been made—and the next there was nothing but a mass of metal with a few of us shouting for help and trying to see whether anyone else was still alive."

Painfully they crawled away from the glowing wreck.

As they crouched on the ground, gasping for breath, a third man came lumbering towards them, hands out as though warding off some fearful vision.

"Where are you? Is there anyone there?" he called.

"We're here—Binks and Bell."

The figure ran towards them, his face fearfully burned, his hair singed from his forehead. In the glow from the incandescent hull they recognized Harry Leech. He came nearer, and they saw that his hands and forearms were gashed and lacerated.

When the lights had gone out and the smoking-room door jammed, Leech picked up a table by its legs and smashed it against a metal bulkhead. The table disintegrated in a mass of useless, spongy fragments, for despite its solid appearance, carefully simulated to look like grained mahogany, it was made of balsa wood. He climbed up the steep incline of the floor and found another table, a chair, an ash-tray, and smashed each in turn against the bulkhead. One after another they all disintegrated.

He began kicking the bulkhead, raining blows on it with the sole of his foot for, like all the crew, he was wearing canvas shoes and there was no strength in the toe. Still the bulkhead resisted him, so he groped along it until the smoothness of the metal gave way to the slightly rougher surface of a panel of asbestos. At first the asbestos stayed firm, but he seized a catch that had been loosened from the panel and tore it away. He kept on tearing at the hole left by the catch and widened it until it was large enough for him to climb through. Then he was out in one of the companionways. Everywhere were terrible yellow and orange flames.

As he stared about him he saw a gap ahead in the side of the airship. Without thinking he jumped.

"I was lucky, for I landed in a tree, and the branches cushioned my fall," he said. "They shook, and the rainwater in them was emptied on to me. I had been well and truly cooked. That rain cooled me off."

Down on the slope the three men found their voices. Already villagers were running with lanterns and torches, and now that the roar of the hydrogen fire had died they could hear shouts. In Beauvais, gendarmes on horseback and on foot were rousing householders and demanding sheets or any other linen to use as bandages for the living, or as winding-sheets for the dead.

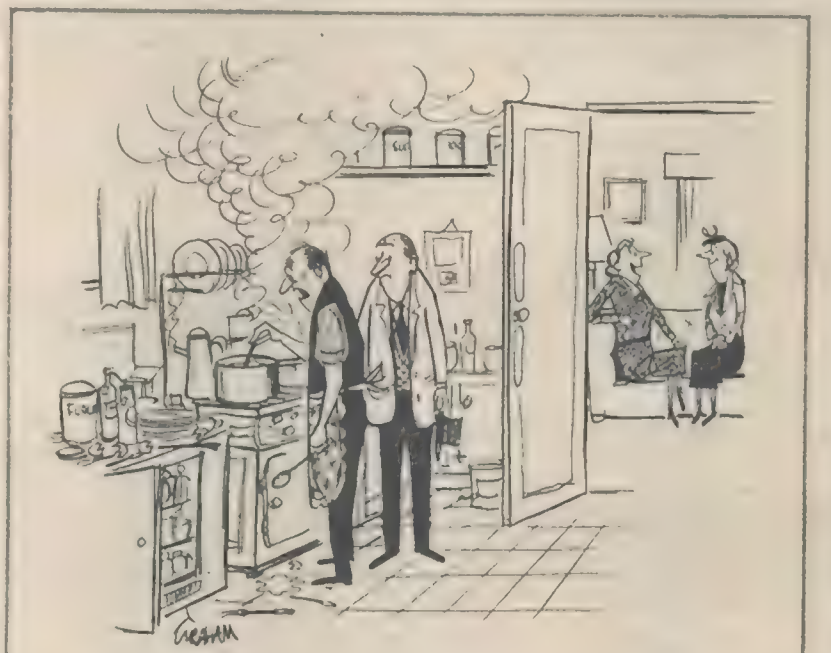
Binks, Leech and Bell, forgetting their own injuries—the intensity of the shock had numbed them, and it was only some time afterwards that they felt the pain from their burns—went up along the port side of the airship to see if they could find anyone alive. The wind was blowing black oil smoke towards them, making their eyes smart. The heat was tremendous.

Soon people arrived with poles, sticks, hammers and axes. They went into the control car, smashing through doors that fire had sealed. But despite the frantic search for survivors, only three others lived to remember that fearful morning in the rain.

One was A. J. Cook, the engineer in the aft port car, who took over at two o'clock from his comrade, Robert Blake, checked the instruments, and then settled down to what he expected to be a routine watch. When the crash came he managed to jump over the side of the car.

Arthur Disley, the electrician, was another survivor. As the airship crashed, the lights went off and, to try to minimize the risk of short circuits and fire, he pressed the button that cut out the dynamos. Miraculously, he suddenly found himself safely outside the wreckage and at once set out across the fields towards Beauvais to seek a telephone. While confusion reigned around him, he impressed upon the local French operator the urgency of the situation, and within minutes was speaking to the Air Ministry in London, giving them the first official news of the disaster.

Victor Savory, the only other survivor who lived more than a few hours, was in the starboard midship engine car. Flames surrounded him, scorching and dazing him, but somehow, with his hands in front of him, he staggered out until he felt the rain on his face and knew that he was free. . . .



"It's my hobby"

THAT morning Air Ministry experts flew to Beauvais to examine the wreckage. Even in death the R 101 was impressive. From a quarter of a mile away her great frame of girders towered above the trees, and at the tip of the enormous tail fin the Royal Air Force ensign still flew—the only piece of fabric that the fire had spared.

It was difficult to believe that the smoke-blackened skeleton was the frame of the airship that had left Cardington only the previous day, and not the girders of some great new building among the trees. But it showed that the designer's calculations of stress and strain had been proved accurate by the fiercest test of all. The crash was not due to faulty construction or to bad design.

The nose of the airship had run into a thin wood of hazel and oak trees. The tail lay out in an open field. The giant rudder rocked slowly to and fro in the afternoon breeze. The oil that, it had been said, could never burn, had soaked into the earth, and the earth had blazed like a wick. . . .

The dead had been carried a little way into the wood and laid out in a row under sheets. Some peasants had placed posies of flowers near them, and others, mostly old women with black shawls over their heads, had brought candles and knelt in prayer until daylight.

Most of the dead were unidentifiable. Each of the coffins was numbered, however, and the same number was also on a small box in which were placed any articles retrieved from the body—a steel pencil perhaps, a cigarette case or the shell of a watch—that had survived the fire. Afterwards, attempts were made to identify these sad relics.

The feeling of immense tragedy that silenced the crowds of onlookers at Beauvais was shared by the rest of the world. King George V, who only a short time before had watched the great airship drone over Sandringham, sent a message of condolence to Ramsay MacDonald, the Prime Minister: "I am horrified to hear of this national disaster."

The Kings of Belgium, Denmark, Egypt, Italy, Sweden, Norway, the ex-King of Portugal, and the Regent of Hungary all sent messages of sympathy. So did Mussolini.

Royal Air Force dispatch riders delivered notes to the next of kin of all the crew, and after them came the reporters. Other people, doubtless meaning well, arrived in cars and invited themselves in to console the widows and their families. Not all had kindly motives. One widow discovered, after the initial flood of callers, most of whom she had never seen before, that not only was her husband's gold watch missing, but also his set of tools—and even his bicycle.

In Bedford, on the Sunday and throughout the following week, blinds were drawn in nearly every house, and the Salvation Army band marched through the streets playing the *Dead March in Saul* over and over again.

All Monday, and until Tuesday morning, the victims of the crash lay in state in Beauvais Town Hall, guarded by soldiers, gendarmes and four Red Cross nurses. On the Tuesday they were moved to a British destroyer at Boulogne and a great procession, with full service honours, mustered in the main square of Beauvais to see them off. There was a detachment from the French naval airship base at Orly, and in places of honour stood the three R 101 survivors who were well enough to attend—Joe Binks, Arthur Bell and Harry Leech.

After they had been brought to London, the dead lay in state at Westminster Hall, and then there was a memorial service at St. Paul's, where the King was represented by the Prince of Wales. Representatives of every foreign power with an embassy or legation in Britain were also present. At the same time a requiem mass was said at Westminster Cathedral for the four Roman Catholics who had died in the disaster.

Then on Saturday, October 11, exactly a week after the airship had set out, the bodies of the passengers and crew were brought back to Cardington to demonstrations of national grief that had previously only been associated with the deaths of kings. More than half a million people turned out to watch the funeral procession from Westminster Hall to Euston Station. It was two miles long and took an hour to pass.

Of the forty-eight coffins, only fourteen bore the names of the dead. On the rest the inscription was simply: "To the memory of the unknown airman who died on October 5." The plates had been made from metal used in the airship.

Bedford observed a day of mourning. All shops were shuttered and there was no traffic on the streets. Blinds were drawn in the houses as a crowd of thousands poured out all morning towards Cardington. In the churchyard there, labourers had worked all through

the previous night by the light of flares to dig a mass grave, the bottom of which was lined with fresh green turf. . . .

On April 1, 1931, the Court of Inquiry appointed to discover, if possible, the causes of the disaster, issued its report. Sir John (later Lord) Simon, the chairman, who had sat with Lieutenant-Colonel John Moore-Brabazon (now Lord Brabazon) and Professor (later Sir) Charles Inglis as assessors, decided that the immediate cause of the disaster was a sudden loss of gas in a forward gas-bag at a time when the nose of the airship was being depressed by a downward current of air. Other factors, such as the fact that the watch had changed at two and the new men had not had time to get the "feel" of the ship, probably contributed.

The report added:

"She had never gone through trials which proved by their length and conditions that she was well able to cope with a continuance of unfavourable circumstances. The programme of trials drawn up by her captain had never been carried through, and the intended length of her last trial was avowedly cut down in order to provide a little more time for preparation before the date which was contemplated for her start for India.

"It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the R 101 would not have started for India on the evening of October 4 if it had not been that reasons of public policy were considered as making it highly desirable for her to do so if she could.

"During the construction, and in the early flights of the R 101, a policy of cautious experiment at each step was admirably fulfilled; but in the later stages, when it became important to avoid further postponement and the flight to India thus became urgent, there was a tendency to rely on limited experiment instead of tests under all conditions."

After the first grief passed, a great reaction against airships set in. The R 100, which had cost £450,000, was broken up with axes. The pieces were crushed by steamroller so that they could be sold for scrap.

The R 101 was broken up in Beauvais by the Sheffield firm of Thos. W. Ward, Ltd., and the pieces were brought home to be made into pots and pans.

At Cardington, the two great airship sheds still stand. During the war barrage balloons were made and stored there.

Arthur Bell and Joe Binks are still at Cardington on Service work. For years after the crash Binks used to wake up at 2 a.m.—the hour when the airship began to fall.

Harry Leech, who was awarded the Albert Medal in recognition of his bravery in re-entering the burning wreckage to rescue a comrade, left Britain in December, 1930, to help Kaye Don with attempts on the land speed record in America. He has also worked on record attempts with Sir Malcolm Campbell, and his son, Donald Campbell.

Arthur Disley, who received the Order of the British Empire for telephoning details of the disaster to the Air Ministry from Beauvais, is with the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

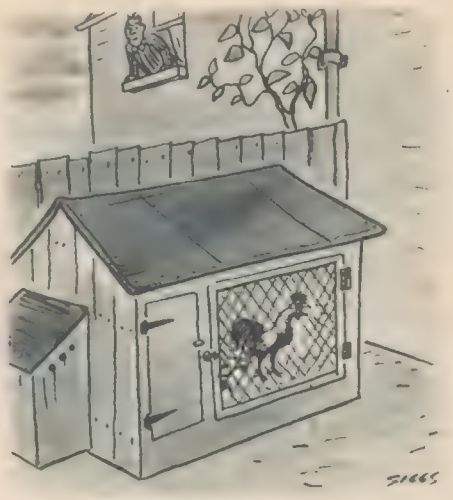
In 1933 an impressive memorial to the dead was unveiled at Beauvais, and in 1955, on the anniversary of the disaster, a further service was held there to show that the forty-eight men are still remembered.

Something of the courage and determination that characterized all the airship men belonged also to their widows. Most made new lives for themselves and their families by their own efforts, for although an R 101 Fund was launched it came at a time of national depression, and only £1,500 was raised. Much of this went to pay for the memorial at Cardington. When the fund was finally wound up in the autumn of 1956 the twenty-nine widows who could be traced received £19 9s. 9d. each.

THE END

"The Millionth Chance," by James Leasor, is published by Hamish Hamilton at 18s.

WHY?



BROWN and French occupied adjoining houses on the outskirts of a village. French kept bantam hens and a cockerel in a shed backing on to the common fence dividing the two properties.

The shed was about eight yards from Brown's bedroom window—and the cockerel persistently ruined his sleep. Finally, Brown went to court, claiming an injunction to prevent the cockerel from being kept so near to his window.

"It is making my life intolerable," he told the judge, "and no one has a right to use his property so that he causes a nuisance to his neighbours."

But Brown lost his case.

WHY? *A barrister explains the judge's ruling on page 25.*

Raffles and the Coffee Queens

Continued from page 17

approached with a slight jingling of the bangles on her slender wrists.

She was a glorious, violet-eyed girl, in attire discreetly suggestive of the East, and she looked from one to the other of us with a shy smile. "Egyptian coffee?" she asked.

"Thank you very, very much, Mayday," said Chastayne and, as she left us, he turned his monocle on us with a glitter of satisfaction. "There now," he said, "you must concede that that settles the argument."

"By no means," Bird said. "I still maintain that Prudence——"

"Hallo, chaps," a voice boomed. "Having a barney? What's it all about?"

A stocky, exuberant fellow in the middle twenties came leaping and bounding across the rugs to us. He went in for yachting, and had a foghorn of a voice, which possibly was the reason why he was known to his friends as "Masthead" Maloney. Told of our difference of opinion, he bellowed with derision.

"Point is," he thundered, "you none of you know what you're talking about. Now, look. Behind the Persian Baths in Jermyn Street there's a place called the Bosphorus Coffee Arcade. There's a girl there who. . . . But why talk? Let's grab a growler and you can see Fleur Francis for yourselves."

Unfortunately, utterly bewitching as Fleur Francis proved to be on our arrival at the Bosphorus Coffee Arcade, we all continued to cleave to our own opinions. Over coffee, the dispute got pretty heated, and suddenly I noticed that a keen look had come into Raffles's eyes.

"Would you chaps," he said, "care to back your opinions?"

All instantly expressed their eagerness to back their opinions up to £50.

"But what's the use of talking?" Chastayne said. "In a case like this, it'd be virtually impossible to find an impartial adjudicator."

"What about an American?" said Raffles gently.

We stared at him in sudden silence.

"There's a suitable one in London at the moment," Raffles said. "Young chap. Been cutting quite a social swathe. Designing mammas have been fluttering. There have been newspaper paragraphs about him."

"That's right," Chastayne said. "Lee Jordan. College man, but must be a bit odd, as he carries everywhere on his travels a safe that's said to hold his worldly wealth—a bale of bearer bonds, or something of the kind, as big as a haystack."

I felt the blood rush into my face. I guessed instantly that Raffles had been seeking some way to make the acquaintance of the American with the safe, and had spotted in the present controversy a plausible pretext. . . .

In a four-wheeler again, the five of us were borne to Half Moon Street, where the American was known to have established himself in service chambers. The instant we filed behind Raffles into the sitting-room I spotted the safe. Square, quite small, it stood in a corner. On the walls of the room pennants were tacked up, apparently college trophies.

Jordan rose at our entrance. Wearing a silk dressing-gown over evening dress, he was tall, loose-limbed with a tanned, agreeable face and almost platinum hair clipped short.

Raffles explained the purpose of our visit, and the young American listened with a dreamy, faraway expression.

"I'm mighty flattered and charmed, gentlemen," he said, in a lazy, attractive voice, "that you should have chosen me to adjudicate on the unusual and interesting point you seem to have at issue here. But I shall need, if I'm to get my teeth into the subject—say, a couple of weeks?"

"Excellent," Raffles said. "In that case, I invite the present company to a bachelor dinner, at my place, on the night of . . . next Saturday week. Mr. Jordan will then announce the name of —in his opinion—the most beautiful, lovable, talented girl currently dispensing coffee in London. To the champion of the girl chosen by Mr. Jordan—let's call her the Coffee Queen—the others will each pay the sum of fifty pounds."

Raffles went north next day, to play cricket, and it was not until the Tuesday morning of the following week that I saw him again. He turned up at my flat as I was shaving.

"A gorgeous morning, Bunny," he said. "I've come to rout you out for breakfast."

The best breakfast in London was to be had at a certain hotel overlooking Kensington Gardens. We were strolling along by the Serpentine when a voice hailed us from the Row. We saw Lee Jordan dismounting from a big bay horse, and walked across the grass to him. He seemed worried.

"Say, fellows," he remarked, after a word or two of greeting, "I guess you didn't realize what kind of a poser you were wishing on me. It was worth coming three thousand miles to get acquainted with any one of those girls, just by herself. But *four* of them. . . ."

I was startled, and rather touched, by the dreamy, troubled way in which he went on to speak of the girls. He had taken Adelphi to the Tower of London, Prudence to see the sculptures in the British Museum, Mayday to admire the dappled deer in Richmond Park, Fleur on a diverting steamer trip to Margate.

"Man alive," Raffles said, looking at him keenly, "you talk of them as though you're half in love with them."

"Half?" Lee Jordan said. "I'm sure as hell in love—but with which one? I'm taking Adelphi out again tonight, but—I don't know. I've never felt this way before."

He swung back into the saddle, and we stood watching him ride away dreamily in the flicker of sun and shade under the trees. We looked at each other.

"Damnation, Bunny," Raffles said. "Assuming his intentions to be honourable, which we've no reason to doubt, suppose he goes and proposes to the wrong girl, what then?"

"How d'you mean?" I said.

"If it were Adelphi," he said, "well and good. We know all about her, and any man who got her would be an enviable man, I don't care who he is. But what do we know about the other three? I can't help wondering—how far may Jordan's money have inspired the evident responsiveness to him of Prudence, Mayday and Fleur? If he marries one of them, then the least we can do is to ensure, if possible, that it's one who loves him honestly."

"But how?" I said, mystified.

"He's going out with Adelphi tonight," Raffles said. "It's my chance. Tonight I'm going to clean out that safe in which he's reputed to carry his worldly wealth, and Lee Jordan will then see which of the girls stands by him when it becomes known, through the police and the newspapers, that he's no longer the rich young American, but flat broke."

He chuckled. "Don't look at me in that horrified way, Bunny," he said. "The swag will be returned to Jordan anonymously, intact—as soon as it's served its purpose. Come, now. Let's breakfast. I've things to get moving."

I was in a fever of funk when I stepped, that evening, from a neat brougham that jingled to a standstill halfway along Constitution Hill. I slipped unobtrusively into Green Park. I was dressed as a valet off duty for an hour to take the air. With a boiled shirt, striped waistcoat and braided trousers I wore a tweed jacket and cloth cap. Round my waist, under the jacket, was wound a valet's swallow-tail coat.

As I neared the rendezvous, which was the gateway just across from Half Moon Street, a shadow detached itself from a tree-trunk and fell in with me.

"All clear," Raffles murmured. He was dressed much as I was. "Jordan went out about six. As I learned this morning, the porter of the chambers locks the outer door about this time and goes to a tavern in Shepherd Market for a bite and a beer. I saw him go out a few minutes ago. It should be plain sailing, Bunny."

Two menservants at ease, we crossed Piccadilly and strolled along Half Moon Street to the house where Jordan had his chambers. With a quick glance each way, Raffles poked up the vertical letter-slot for a look into the hall, then

ENTHUSIASM—2

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unlocked the door with a skeleton key.

We slipped inside. Raffles closed the door and led the way up the stairs to the first floor. There was a feeling of people being in the house, but along the carpeted corridors all the doors were closed, and Raffles breathed: "Right. Keep *cave*. I'll try not to be long."

I hid my jacket and cap behind a pedestal and slipped on the swallowtail coat. My heart pumped slow and heavy as I lighted a cigarette with unsteady fingers. I loitered like a valet who had stepped out of his master's room for a hasty puff.

I peered along the corridor. All the gaslights were turned low, and a clock in the hall ticked in an uncanny way, now fast, now slow, as though talking to itself. Interminably the clock ticked. I sweated. I cursed Raffles for the time he was taking and for all his works, his very existence. . . .

I felt a touch on my arm. Wringing wet, I spun round. It was Raffles. He grinned, patting his jacket under which he was hugging something.

"I've got the swag," he said. "Off you go. I'll give you one minute, then follow."

I whipped off the swallowtail coat, tied it round my waist, grabbed from behind the pedestal the jacket and cap, and, donning them as I went, ran down the stairs, and slipped out into the night. Half an hour later I was safely at Raffles's place, drinking a stiff whisky.

When Raffles walked in, he tossed on to the table a black leather satchel secured by a thin brass rod with a small padlock, also brass, at each end.

"That's all there was in the safe," he said. "Bearer bonds, presumably. It'll go back, unopened when it's served its purpose."

I still felt uneasy. Of all Raffles's crimes, it was precisely those which he called "amateur" which I most misdoubted and feared. There was nothing in the papers the next day, nothing the following day, Thursday. On the Friday there was still nothing. I went to bed with the feeling that some unseen net was closing stealthily, inescapably about me.

SCARCELY, it seemed, had I closed my eyes than I was jerked awake by the jangling of my doorbell. Holding my breath, I opened the door a crack. On the landing stood Lee Jordan and A. J. Raffles.

"'Morning, Bunny," Raffles said, as they came in. "We're wanted as witnesses."

"Witnesses?" My dry lips shaped the word.

"Witnesses," Raffles said, "of the marriage of Adelphi Brown and Lee Jordan at St. Pancras Register Office, at eleven thirty this morning."

I could only stare.

"Lee has to return to the States urgently," Raffles said. "So he was able to get a special licence. He only remembered this morning about witnesses, so he came haring round to the Albany to rope me in, and we've come to co-opt you."

He took out his half-hunter. "It's now quarter to nine. Lee and Adelphi are sailing in the Teutonic boat-train leaving at one thirty. Now then. I shall collect Adelphi and get her to the Register Office at eleven thirty. You, Bunny, will stand by Lee and get him braced up and on muster. Right? Good. I'm giving a wedding breakfast for them, at the Albany. So I'm off now to see my wine merchant."

I shook hands with Lee and congratulated him. To my surprise, Raffles shook hands with me. I felt a square of paper pressed into my palm. The instant I had closed the door on them, I read the pencilled message:

This makes nonsense of our plan, Bunny. Get round to Half Moon Street quickly. I judge that Lee's had no occasion to open his safe, so doesn't yet dream that the satchel's gone. I've got to put it back. Give me time to collect it and return to Half Moon Street. Then get Lee out of his chambers for at least fifteen minutes. I'll be on the watch.

I burned the paper, dressed hastily in wedding finery, and rushed round on foot to Half Moon Street. Lee's dreaminess had fallen from him. He was pacing restlessly up and down. Clothes were scattered all over his sitting-room. Portmanteaux gaped open.

"I'm not good enough for her," he was muttering. He looked at me in a kind of agony. "I'm telling you, Manders, I'm a no-good son-of-a-gun."

"Now, now," I said, "every bridegroom feels that. Brace up!"

Somehow, I got him packed and dressed. All the time I had one eye on the clock, estimating Raffles's movements, and simultaneously racking my brains for some pretext to get Lee out of his chambers for fifteen minutes.

The perfect answer occurred to me as I stepped back for a critical survey of his morning dress. He was wearing a waistcoat of New York cut. "Lee," I said impulsively, "I want to give you a little wedding present. My haberdasher is in Sackville Street, a stone's throw away. No, no, I won't hear a word. Here's your hat."

It took us five minutes to walk to Sackville Street, ten to pick out a decent pearl-grey waistcoat for him, five to walk back. This was five minutes more than Raffles had asked for. Feeling pretty pleased with myself, I was totally unprepared for the sight that met my eyes when Lee and I entered the hall of the chambers.

A uniformed constable was standing there, and two plain-clothes men whom I knew by sight as Inspector Kortright and Sergeant Ellis were talking to the porter. I was certain, instantly, that Raffles had been taken. My feet turned to ice. But when the porter murmured something to Kortright, and that big, grim man came towards us, it was Lee he addressed.

"Mr. Lee M. Jordan?" he said. "I have to inform you, Mr. Jordan, that I am here to execute a search warrant upon you. We will adjourn to your quarters, please."

I was so taken aback by this that I blurted: "Surely there must be some mistake. Mr. Jordan is getting married at eleven thirty."

"Your name, sir?" Kortright said to me coldly. And when a note had been taken of it, he said significantly: "I think you'd better come along, too, Mr. Manders."

I felt as though in a trance as we all went upstairs to Lee's sitting-room.

"Leaving England, Mr. Jordan?" said Kortright, surveying the luggage.

"By the one thirty boat-train for the Teutonic," Lee said. "See here, Inspector, what's going on here?"

"Ever heard of the Knickerbocker Kid, Mr. Jordan?" Kortright said, with a kind of frosty geniality. "No? You surprise me, sir. Because information has been laid to the effect that Mr. Lee M. Jordan, temporarily of Half Moon Street, London, is known to the New York underworld as a jewel thief called the Knickerbocker Kid."

I stood stunned.

"The dogs," Lee Jordan said softly. "Why, those cute dogs! I came over in the boat with some fellows I was in college with, Inspector." He nodded at the pennants which, in the rush of packing, he had omitted to take down from the wall. "We kidded around a whole lot—practical jokes—you know the way it is on a long voyage. I guess the score came out on my side, and some of them allowed they aimed to even with me before we all sailed for home." He smiled with dreamy amusement. "This 'information,' now—I reckon it was anonymous?"

"That's as may be," Kortright said. He looked from the platinum-haired, dreamy young man to the college pennants on the wall, and he seemed a bit shaken. "At all events," he said, "in recent weeks we've had a crop of jewel robberies, much played up in the newspapers. Hence this search warrant."

"Go right ahead," said Lee Jordan. He tossed his key-ring to Kortright, and smiled to himself. "The Knickerbocker Kid," he murmured amusedly. "Why, those cute dogs!"

I could not take my eyes from him as the search went on all round me. *I'm a no-good son-of-a-gun,* he had said to me. What had he meant? My mind was racing. If he were a jewel thief, if his black satchel had contained swag and he knew that the satchel had been taken from his safe, then the poor young devil's present dreamy imperturbability was based on an illusion. He did not know that I had lured him to the haberdasher's in order to give Raffles a chance to put the satchel *back* in the safe.

Having gone through the luggage Kortright now brought up the matter I had been dreading.

"This safe here, Mr. Jordan," Kortright said. "I understand it accompanies you on your travels."

"Why, no," Lee said, in his vague way. "Guess I'm all through with it."

A nightmare inhibition clamped me rigid as, dropping to one knee before the safe, the platinum-haired youth turned the cylinder of the combination back and forth, depressed the lever, and with dreamy confidence pulled open the heavy door.

The safe was empty.

Kortright took it hard. "So you're leaving on the Teutonic today, Mr. Jordan," he said. "I think you're very, very wise."

With this nasty remark, the unwelcome visitors grudgingly withdrew, and I exclaimed: "Ye gods, look at the time, Lee. We'll be late at the Register Office."

In the hansom, we said hardly a word. I was wondering what in the world had happened to Raffles and the mysterious black satchel. And was Lee or was he not the Knickerbocker Kid?

The hansom jingled to a standstill in Gower Place, before the building of St. Pancras Register Office. I told the cabbie to wait, and with Lee I mounted the steps and passed through glass-paned swing-doors into a large, dim hall. A clock there ticked with a hollow, fateful sound. It was two minutes to eleven thirty. A clerkly man glided up to us, pinching on eye-glasses to consult a paper in his hand.

"Mr. Lee M. Jordan?" he murmured. "Quite so. Special licence, I perceive. The Registrar will be ready for you in a few minutes. H'm, Miss

The Summer Boy

by JOHN SMITH

The summer boy who in the brake
Puts thrush and linnet quick to rout
Whose calling makes the echoes wake
And leap like roaring tigers out;

Who stabs the minnowed stream with brown
And bramble-stinging legs that swish
And make the wrinkled water frown
Where five-finned whales afright small fish;

Whose eyes are brighter than ten suns
That roll their slow elaborate course,
Whose swift blood through his rich limbs runs
With twice their heat and twice their force;

All livelong day that summer boy
Holds in his spell the burgeoning world;
Its green and glory is his joy
While in his heart the seed lies curled

That sixty summers from this day
Shall bud within his evening rooms
Until, like light to keep at bay
The dark, the flower of memory blooms.

"You want to brush up your Highway Code, old boy—opening a door like that without watching out for traffic!"

Adelphi Brown will be here on time, I trust. Be seated, please."

He glided away. Lee Jordan ran a finger round inside his collar. I mopped the palms of my hands.

The clock chimed two mellow, throbbing notes. Before the sound had died away in the hush, a hansom jingled to a standstill outside and A. J. Raffles alighted. I expected to see him turn to help Adelphi down, but he did not. He was alone. He removed his silk hat as he strode into the hall. His keen face was impassive.

The clerkly man came gliding up. "The lady . . . ?"

"Kindly show us to a room," Raffles said, "where we can talk privately."

His head shaking worriedly, the clerkly man showed us into a gloomy, shelf-lined room and closed the door on us.

Raffles took a Sullivan from his cigarette-case, looking with grey, hard eyes at Lee Jordan.

"I am an investigator," Raffles said, "for an insurance company. I have methods of my own, to which the police here find it in their interest to turn a blind eye." So icily convincing was his tone that I almost believed him myself.

"My attention was drawn to you, Jordan," he went on, "in connection with some recent jewel robberies. On Tuesday night, when you were out with Adelphi Brown, I cracked your safe and removed the satchel it contained."

All Lee Jordan's dreaminess had fallen from him. He had turned haggard.

"No need to tell you," Raffles said, "what I found in the satchel. Stolen jewellery, wadded in cottonwool. I held my tongue, Jordan—for one reason only. That reason was Adelphi Brown. Now, I want the truth. What was the idea of travelling with that safe?"

"It was a stunt I thought up," Lee said. "I figured that the 'rich young American' who travelled with a safe would be good for paragraphs, attract people to me. Designing mammas—that kind—people with money. The safe worked fine."

"Indeed," Raffles said dryly. He had been attracted by the safe himself. "Then on Tuesday you returned to your chambers to find the satchel gone. Surely, not knowing what repercussions might follow, your instinct must have been to bolt instantly. Why didn't you?"

"I was hamstrung," Lee Jordan said miserably. "I'd spent that evening with Adelphi—and that threw me, that clinched it. When I found the satchel gone I knew I ought to get out of England at once, but I couldn't go without her. I ran *to* her.

"I ran right around to Coster John's Coffee Room next morning. I swear to you I meant to tell her about myself and give her my solemn oath that, if she'd have me and come with me, I'd go straight as a gun barrel from then on. But when she looked at me with those brown eyes of hers, as honest as the day—I couldn't tell her. I'm a no-good son-of-a-gun. I just took her in my arms."

There was not a sound in the room. Raffles was watching Lee Jordan. I looked at the floor.

"Jordan," Raffles said slowly, "it took a lot of courage for you to stay in London these past few days, a great deal of courage. Now, I *could* see that that stuff gets to the insurance companies with no questions asked. But in the matters of the heart no man living has the last word. It's always with the woman.

"Jordan, Adelphi is in the hansom outside. You can take your choice. You can go out to her now and tell her the truth about yourself, in which case what follows will be up to Adelphi. Or you can walk away, and sail on the Teutonic—alone."

The two cracksmen looked at each other for a moment, then Lee Jordan turned and walked from the room.

"Bunny," Raffles said to me, quietly, "I saw you get him out of the chambers. I waited a minute or two, then was just going along to hocus my way past the porter when the police turned up. I strolled past the front door. It was open. I paused to light a cigarette. I heard them questioning the porter about Lee.

"I walked straight on round to the Albany, picked the padlocks of the satchel, found jewellery in it, and

WHY?

See page 23

BECAUSE the judge held that anyone who lives in the country must expect his next-door neighbour to keep a cockerel. Provided it is not an unusually noisy one, nothing can be done about it. The fact that this particular cockerel was so near to Brown's window was immaterial. A reasonable person would have become so accustomed to the noise that his sleep would not have been disturbed.

(*This ruling is based on actual cases*)

Light up this moment

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BACHELOR
TIPPED

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b.c.57

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recognized pieces that an insurance company had described in advertisements. It told me the whole story."

"He's called the Knickerbocker Kid," I whispered.

"Whatever he's called," Raffles said, "let's see what's happening."

We went into the hall. Outside the glass-paned doors, Lee Jordan was standing hesitant on the steps. The hansom was not drawn up directly before the entrance. Adelphi could not have seen him, any more than he could see her. He could walk away if he chose.

He went down the steps. Again he hesitated. Then, very slowly, like a man drawn by something stronger than himself, he got into the hansom.

The hansom stood motionless. Now and then the harness jingled as the horse stamped. At last I saw Lee step out again. He turned. He gave a hand to Adelphi. Her dress was pink and had lace on it. She wore a little round straw hat in blue, with pink roses on it, and she carried a small bouquet. Raffles and I held open the doors for them. They seemed not to see us as they walked past, holding each other's hands very tightly.

So Raffles, who had not spoken for her because he was a cracksman, stood witness for her marriage to a cracksman. I could not guess what irony he might be feeling. But there it was, for better or for worse, as the Registrar read out. I kissed the bride, and she turned to Raffles, and I knew that he kissed her, too, but I did not want to see that and I busied myself signing the book. We followed Adelphi and Lee out into the sunshine.

All Gower Street seemed suddenly to have become jammed with hansoms. Fleet Street had got the word, as it usually did. Out of the hansoms came pouring what seemed to me most of the journalists in London. They had come to see old Byron Brown's girl, Adelphi, of Coster John's Coffee Room, off on her honeymoon.

Amid the tumult I saw Raffles take an envelope from his pocket and whisper to Lee. I saw Lee's grin, quite undreamy. He scribbled on the envelope, Raffles returned it to his pocket without looking at it, and Adelphi and Lee ran the gauntlet of cheers and rice-showers.

Lee lifted Adelphi into the hansom, and Raffles, stepping forward, called: "The wedding breakfast's at the Albany. Gentlemen of the press are welcome."

In the hansom in which I had come with Lee, Raffles and I were first away after the one carrying the couple.

"Raffles," I said, as we jingled briskly across Cambridge Circus in the sunshine, "the swag of the ex-Knickerbocker Kid will, I trust, be duly, if anonymously, delivered to the interested insurance companies?"

A glance at his face reassured me, but after a while another thought occurred to me, and I looked back at the long line of other hansoms jingling along behind us up the whole length of Shaftesbury Avenue.

"All the same," I said, "entertaining this lot is going to cost us a pretty penny. It's just as well we shall win our bet from Bird, Chastayne and Masthead Maloney."

"Just as well," Raffles said dryly. "Especially as, not knowing how Lee is placed for ready, and not wanting him to fall into temptation before Adelphi's influence is properly established, I slid a couple of fifty-quid notes into his hip-pocket." He took out an envelope. "About the bet, Bunny, I reminded Lee to deliver his formal judgment."

He unfolded the envelope. He looked at it for several seconds, and then, his face expressionless, handed it to me. I read the pencilled scrawl: *I hereby adjudge London's Coffee Queen to be Miss Prudence Bailey, of the Baghdad Coffee Club Divan, Leicester Square. Lee M. Jordan.*

I could hardly believe my eyes. "Prudence?" I said incredulously. "We've got to pay fifty quid to that disgusting actor chap with the profile, Alphonse Bird? But in heaven's name——"

"I'm afraid," Raffles said, "that we've come a cropper over a single word. The bet stipulated 'the most beautiful, lovable, talented girl currently dispensing coffee in London.' Lee's evidently construed 'currently' as meaning—at the time his judgment was handed down. At that time, of course, Adelphi had resigned from the coffee house business."

Meditatively, he offered me a Sullivan. "Never mind, Bunny," he said. "Think of what we have."

"Have?" I said blankly. "What have we?"

"Most of Fleet Street's on our tail," he said, "but only you and I, Bunny, have the story."

His grey eyes looked at me reflectively. "The story of Adelphi," said A. J. Raffles, "and a kiss to remember her by."

THE END

September Moon

Continued from page 7

that you could break your neck in that, rather than smash up the farm machinery."

He was in a bad temper. The sanitary inspector had turned out to be a new one, even more fussy than the last. He had demanded to see the hop-pickers' accommodation.

"We house 'em in the pigsties," John had said.

"Mr. Sollars, we must have *some* respect for human beings."

"I have some respect for my pigs. I'll show you."

He'd taken the man round. The pens were brick-built and airy. Always before hop-picking they were whitewashed afresh and boarded up into separate cubicles. Each cubicle had a couple of bales of straw on which the pickers laid their mattresses and bedding. There was electric light, which removed the risk that the Saturday-night drunks might set the place on fire with oil lamps; and it came in useful, too, when the sows were farrowing.

The Black Country people occupied these pigsties, which were therefore called Dudley Mansions. The Welsh had a big barn, Abertillery Hall, and the gipsies, of course, lived in their own caravans.

The sanitary inspector said doubtfully: "I suppose you disinfect the sties thoroughly before the people go in?"

"Yes. I also disinfect them thoroughly before I put my pigs back."

John Sollars hated all officials. Thoroughly ruffled, he had walked down to the hopyards to get himself calm again.

The bines, fifteen feet tall, swung like a green arras in the gentle wind. Between them there was a cool green shade. He loved to see the hopyards like this, inviolate, still.

Now, with Tim, he stretched up his hand and pulled down towards him a handful of the pale green bobbles. He said: "It's a good crop everywhere: easy picking. It won't hurt 'em to pick for one and two."

"One and tuppence?" Tim was surprised; last year the hops had been much thinner, certainly, but they'd paid the pickers one and sixpence a bushel.

"I'd have thought," he ventured, "we could make it one and three at least."

"You would, would you, Master Know-all? Well, fertilizer's gone up, labour's gone up, even string's gone up, and they tell me the sale of beer is going down. So it's got to be one and two. We fixed it last night, after the N.F.U. meeting."

"You all agreed to that?"

"All except Tomkins. He wasn't at the meeting. I tried to get him on the phone but I couldn't. Cut off again I suppose."

Tim glanced at the teeming hops. He could see what a good crop it was. Easy picking; but he still thought one and two a bushel was miserable pay. It was never any use arguing with his father, though.

John Sollars was grumbling on: "I wish the damn fool would pay his phone bill. I'll have to take the car and go up to the Hope and tell him what we've arranged about the rate for the picking." He paused. "The Hope," he added, almost to himself, as he looked across the dip towards it. "What a bloody Hope, too!" Yet it could be made into a first-rate farm, if a man had the capital and the common sense. The land, despite Tommy's neglect, was in good heart.

Yes; he admitted it to himself, he wanted the Hope farm. If he'd had the mortgage on it, Tommy would probably have been out by now, and the hedge by the river would have been decently laid, and there'd have been none of those mousey-looking half-breeds eating that meadow-grass.

It wasn't greed in the ordinary sense, but a kind of lust, the last one left to him: the lust for land, not only to possess it but to tame it as he would break a horse, to make it serve him, to bring it back from unruly disorder into the kind of domesticity which he knew as Good Farming.

"Well, I'll go and see the little beggar," he said reluctantly. "You'd better hitch on the trailer and fetch in some bales of straw for the pickers. Get yourself something to eat first, though."

Tim drove off along the headland beside the wind-break of poplar trees. From his perch on the Fordson he could see the main road, which was deep-cut here. He caught a glimpse of the roof and little chimney of a caravan.

A moment later he recognized the caravan; it was bright green with yellow shafts, and that was Black Herbie's. Black Herbie would be on his way to the Hope; he had such a bad name that Tim's father wouldn't have him on the place, nor any of his gang, so he always picked for Tommy, camping in the field by the river next to the Sollarshill meadows.

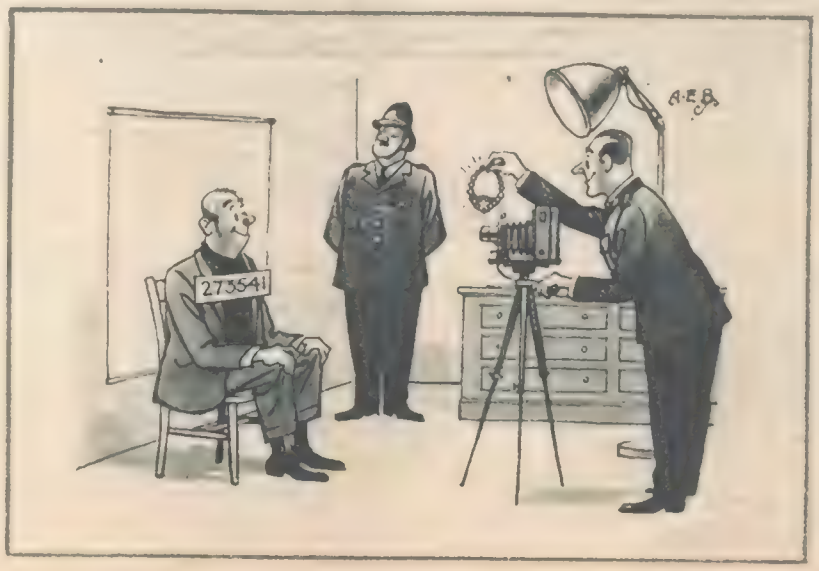
The gipsies who picked at Sollarshill, about two score of them, were the band of Wisdom Lee, who was called the King of the Gipsies because he was more powerful and authoritative than the rest. Last year Black Herbie had challenged his authority; there had been a fight, and the older man had beaten the younger one, but Tim guessed it had been a near thing.

This year the up-and-coming Herbie would doubtless challenge Wisdom again; and there'd be a new King of the Gipsies if Wisdom were beaten.

AGAINST the annual incursion of the gipsies Mrs. Agnew made ready the Royal Victoria as a prudent captain prepares his vessel to meet an expected storm; the decks cleared, the hatches battened down and all loose objects secured.

September the first was ringed in red ink on the calendar hanging up behind the bar.

She had just completed the last of her preparations when Mr. Tomkins drove up in his very old car that had white patches showing through the rubber of its tyres and a windscreen which had gone yellow with age. He wanted to use her telephone because his wouldn't work. "Something's gone wrong with the wahs," he said in his lah-did-dah voice, but, of course, Mrs. Agnew guessed that he hadn't paid his bill.



He didn't seem in a hurry to phone. Instead he ordered a double whisky, and made polite conversation. "You're all ready for them, I see," he said, noticing the fire bucket in the corner of the saloon. "One's always afraid of fahs, when the gipsies are about. Dear fellows, they're very careless and happy-go-lucky."

He asked for another whisky, and Mrs. Agnew guessed that he was fortifying himself against some dreaded ordeal on the telephone. Ringing up the bank, perhaps? His cheques generally bounced once, and sometimes twice, before they went through. He was "always a gentleman," nevertheless; and it didn't seem fair to Mrs. Agnew that he should be so poor whereas all the other hop farmers were so rich.

She knew that the prosperous hop farmers despised him. But they'd made most of their money during the war, when Tommy Tomkins could probably have made a fortune, too, if he hadn't taken it into his head to join up, leaving his farm in charge of a foreman who let it go to rack and ruin.

Mrs. Agnew was sorry for him; and she was sorrier still when she'd let him into her back room and overheard what he was saying on the telephone. . . .

"Sell me up? My dear boy! After all, you're pretty well-breeched, you know, and you can afford to wait just a little. . . . It's the principle, you say? Now, George, George, just think of all the monstrous things that are done in the name of principles. . . . Yes, dear boy, I do know that, but just at the moment I simply can't lay my hands on a. . . . I tell you, as soon as the hops are picked I shall be able . . . a splendid crop. . . . You don't believe me? Well, come and see."

This was said rather defiantly, and apparently it got an unexpected answer, for Mr. Tomkins admitted with obvious reluctance: "Yes, of course there's a spare room. . . . The day after tomorrow? Well, yes, it will be delightful to see you after all this time."

But when he came out of the back room he looked far from delighted. He ordered another drink.

"You couldn't, I suppose, put it on the slate? I changed my trousers before I came out."

Of course they were the same filthy grey ones he always wore. But Mrs. Agnew smiled. "Certainly, Mr. Tomkins," she said. For he always paid up in the end.

Tommy swallowed the whisky and then left. Chugging home, he tried to picture his brother George among the gipsies at hop-picking: George, for example, confronted by Black Herbie at one of those moments of sombre reflection when Black Herbie was

sharpening his knife; or being kissed by Mrs. Wisdom Lee, who kissed everybody when she'd had a pint or two of cider; or twitching his long thin nose at the smell of Grannie Lee's pipe.

In his working hours George was a high-up official at the Ministry of Education. When Tommy had visited him there, to beg for a loan, he had found him sitting in a large office, which had a carpet appropriate to his rank, at a terribly tidy desk upon which a single neatly drawn graph lay exactly half-way between the "In" and the "Out" trays. It was to do with School Places, and that meant children, but they hardly ever used the word children at the Ministry.

In the hopyards George would encounter some real ones, by no means School Places, but yelling, swearing, fighting, biting, eye-gouging imps of hell. Tommy spurred his imagination across a tall fence of improbability and saw George in their company; trying to stop their gobs with the boiled sweets which he always carried. He thought they were good for his duodenal.

These boiled sweets, tiger-striped stickjaws, had long ago laid the foundation of the Tomkins's family fortune, of which Tommy had squandered his portion, though George still clung to his; for, though he affected to despise money, George would neither spend it nor give it away.

TOMMY was approaching the crossroads now, and the signpost which, though he had bumped it last Saturday night, on the way home from the pub, still pointed its arms in the general direction of SOLLARSHILL, STOKE EDITH, WESTON BEGGARD and THE HOPE. As he began to turn the corner, he glanced towards his hopyard, a thick foam of green, and it suddenly struck him that this was perhaps the last season he would look upon it. George meant business, since he was coming down specially from London. . . .

There was a screech of brakes. Tommy was aware of a cloud of white dust as John Sollars's Bristol did a dry skid towards him. Then came the crash. Glass tinkled from a broken headlamp.

The Bristol skidded to rest half-way over the crossroads. John Sollars jumped out and began walking rapidly round it.

"Bloody fool," said John Sollars. "Look at that scratch; and she's practically new." The scratch on the Bristol seemed a very small one to Tommy, but Sollars went on: "It'll mean a new panel, and cost the earth. Still, I suppose you're insured."

"Third party," said Tommy, wondering whether he still owed for the premium.

"Hardly pay you to insure your old rattle-trap comprehensive." John strode across to it. "How the hell can you see out of that windscreen?"

"I can't, much. I poke my head round it."

"Well, you weren't poking your head round it when you came to the crossroads. I've just been to your place."

"Oh yes?"

"Rate for the pickers: one and two a bushel. I told your girl. We've all agreed it."

"Except the hop-pickers."

He didn't want to argue; he simply stated the fact. But John Sollars fairly snapped at him.

"They must take it or leave it."

"It's not much."

"The hops are thick and picking will be easy. Anyhow, we've settled it; and one and tuppence it is. We've got to hang together."

"I suppose so," said Tommy unhappily.

He drove on. The car still worked—just about. As he pulled up in the yard, Marianne came out of the back door of the farmhouse.

"You all right?" she asked.

"Yes, but I hit old Sollars's Bristol."

"Who won?"

"His precious Bristol got a bit of a scratch."

"Serve his precious Bristol right. He's been up here."

"I know."

"He said, 'Tell your father the rate for the pickers is one and two this year.' Who's he to give orders?"

"The big fellows fix it between them. We're only tiddlers."

"I don't like him. . . . Must we really stick to one and two?"

"Well, it's a kind of gentleman's agreement."

"Is it fair?"

"I shouldn't think so."

"Let's pick with them tomorrow," she said, "and see. . . ."

It was one of those Garden of Eden mornings when everything is made new. There had been the same heavy mist as yesterday, but it rolled away down the hill, and the sudden sharp sunlight defined each hop-leaf separately, etching them lobe by lobe as they hung down from the strings.

Tommy had carried one of the "bins," which were bags of sacking stretched on a frame of withy-poles, to a part of the field well away from the pickers. He was full of early morning enthusiasm. He was picking with Marianne to see how many bushels they got in half a day, and find out if the rate of one and tuppence was fair.

He had already been the round of the pickers, shaking hands with them all, welcoming them back, rather like an old-fashioned host greeting the guests at a garden party. *Old Sollars wouldn't do that,* Marianne thought; he'd stride round with a curt nod here and there.

Tommy said suddenly: "Our tractor's going very badly."

She could hear the engine spluttering as it went round with the trailer to collect the full sacks of hops and take them up to the kiln. She glanced at her father, and realized that he'd got tired of picking and was formulating an excuse to go down to the pub.

He bustled off to fiddle with the tractor. Then he came back to say he hadn't got a spanner, and would have to borrow one in the village.

"Beastly jolly rotten nuisance. *Would* happen, just as we were settling down to the job."

He was so absurd, so impossible, in a way so helpless, that she caught herself wondering why her mother had married him, and loved him, and been happy with him, and lent him the last of her own money to launch some foolish scheme he had for growing cricket-bat willows on the banks of the Wye. That had failed, like all the other schemes: the Hop Machine Scheme; the Applejack Scheme; the great Melon Scheme, when he had decided it would be profitable to grow a thousand melons under cloches.

She watched him go off. It was no fun picking on her own, so she wandered about round the hopyards and added a small tribute of hops to each of the other bins in turn. She picked with the family from Oldbury; with the Welsh party from Pontypridd, which was led by the old Welsh miner, Mr. Roberts; and then with Black Herbie's gang.

They were brewing tea when Marianne got to them. She took a chipped cup from Betsy, Black Herbie's wife, and she smelled the hop smell on her sticky hand as she drank it.

She could have predicted exactly what Black Herbie's Betsy was going to say.

"That there bushel-basket's too big, Missie. Truth it is. 'Tis not a fair basket. My Herbie was saying——"

They always, as a matter of principle, argued about the size of the basket, though of course it was a standard size.

Marianne laughed. "I expect it's the same basket as last year."

"Now you wasn't here last year, Missie. Nor the year before."

Black Herbie lounged up. He said wheedlingly: "What do you think the 'rate will be, Missie? One and six? Sure to be. The hops pick terrible hard."

"They're a good crop, Herbie. They pick easy."

Black Herbie eyed Marianne gloomily. "Eight bushels in four hours between five of us. That ain't easy picking, Missie."

Of course there weren't five of them really. There was Betsy, and there was Black Herbie, who was deliberately going slow, as the gipsies always did on the first day, so that the small quantity they had picked might help them to argue that the job was profitless. Then there was his pert, pretty daughter, Sue, who spent much of her time fiddling with her handbag and looking at her face in the mirror on the flap of it; and there were two boys who had a fitcher ferret which they kept in their coat pockets but released every now and then for the fun of chasing and retrieving it.

Black Herbie suddenly turned and addressed his tribe, the Butlers and their relations, who were picking at an adjacent bin. Alf Butler was his brother-in-law, having married Black Liz.

"We shall be all right." Herbie shouted. "Missie says she thinks the rate will be one and six, maybe more."

"I didn't!"

Herbie ignored her. "We'll get paid fair. Mr. Tomkins is a good boss."

Marianne was aware of the purpose of this public announcement. Black Herbie had seen Tommy go off and had guessed where he was going, for the gipsies always guessed things like that. When Tommy came back, in a state, Black Herbie hoped, of reckless generosity, Herbie would immediately ask him to fix the rate. . . .

When Tommy got back, he left the car in the yard, spouting like a whale through the radiator cap; the fan belt had broken, and she'd boiled all the way up the hill. He got to the stile at the corner of the hopyard and climbed over it and suddenly Black Herbie and his gang were all about him, like Red Indians ambushing a paleface.

Herbie took a pace towards Tommy and cried loudly: "You're a good boss and I'll knock down the man as says you ain't." He glanced about him theatrically, as if he expected a hidden enemy to accept his challenge.

Quite bewildered, Tommy flickered his eyelids with the nervous twitch which always came into operation when he was surprised or embarrassed. Herbie now slunk up to his left side, and Alf Butler to his right, and all the children gathered round. Herbie, in a hoarse whisper, demanded: "It's true, ain't it, Mister, what Missie said?"

"What's true?" said Tommy.

"Why, as you're going to pay us one and a tanner, because the picking's harder than last year?"

Tommy, blinking fast, looked from Herbie to Alf and back to Herbie, recognizing their cunning, yet seeing something endearing in it, as he would in the cunning of children. He realized that he ought to have stuck out against John Sollars; he ought to have told him he wouldn't be a party to any private arrangement the big growers might have made between themselves. But it was too late now.

"One and a tanner," croaked Black Herbie in his left ear.

"Eighteen pence," breathed Alf Butler in his right.

"Well . . ." Tommy began.

"Father!" Marianne came running down the hop row. "Father, I want to talk to you." Then she had him by the arm and was walking him away.

"They asked for one and six——?" she began.

"Yes. They said you said——"

"Of course I didn't. But you were just about to promise them——"

"I wasn't."

"You were, you were. I could see it." She tugged his arm. "You *are* an old softie."

Tommy said still bewildered: "Well, what *shall* we pay them? I suppose it ought to be one and two, because of John Sollars."

Marianne said, incisively, what John Sollars could do with himself. "And we're not going to be bounced into anything by Black Herbie," she went on. "He's a crook and a clever-breeches. I don't like him. But we want to be fair, don't we? I've had an idea. Let's ask Mr. Roberts."

Already she was beckoning to the old Welsh miner. Mr. Roberts came slowly towards them, holding himself very straight, and Marianne said: "Mr. Roberts, we want you to help us to fix the rate for the picking. You've been at it all day and you know how many bushels you and the girls have got. What's fair?"

If he was surprised at being asked, the old man didn't show it. He pondered the question carefully and at

ENTHUSIASM—3

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last, without any preliminaries or qualifications but with absolute authority, he said: "One shilling and fourpence would be fair."

Marianne turned to Tommy, but of course there was no need. He nodded and said: "So be it," and wondered what John Sollars would say. . . .

This year, Wisdom Lee had brought with him a little dun pony that was the apple of his eye. In the cool of the evening after that first day's hop-picking, he put a halter on her and, running beside her, trotted her down to the Royal Victoria. Marta and old Grannie Lee and a horde of children followed him.

There were a lot of gipsies in the bar, and they drifted out one by one to look at the pony. Wisdom slapped her sleek quarters and cried: "Worth twenty pounds a leg, twenty-five pounds a leg, wouldn't sell her for a hundred." And truly he didn't want to sell her. He had brought her down to the pub only to display her and to enjoy the honour and glory which his possession of her brought him. She was lovely: the trimmest, most quick-footed, cleanest-legged pony he'd owned in thirty years of horse-dealing.

It was in his mind that shortly Black Herbie would come to the Royal Victoria. Black Herbie would cast covetous eyes on the pony, and he, Wisdom, would gain in stature and authority over Black Herbie by reason of his ownership of the little dun mare.

Sure enough, a little later, Black Herbie drove up at a canter in a flimsy, high trap which belonged to Alf Butler. Betsy and Sue and several of the Butlers were crowded together in it. Black Herbie pulled up by heaving so hard on the reins that his pony put its forefeet together and slithered to a stop.

Herbie jumped down and threw the reins to one of the Butler children. With Betsy and Sue he came across and gave a casual glance at the pony.

"What have you got there?"

"Best little pony *you've* ever set eyes on," said Wisdom. "Look at her, man, *look*!" Wisdom untied the little mare and ran her up and down the road outside the pub, and all the gipsies gathered to watch.

Just then, with a noisy crackle, a blue sports car shot round the corner, and the pony reared up, nearly pulling the halter-rope out of Wisdom's hand. The car stopped outside the pub and Tim Sollars came over to Wisdom.

"Sorry I gave her a fright," he said. "I say, that's something like." He ran his eye over the pony, and nodded appreciatively.

Wisdom beamed. All the gipsies knew that Master Tim was a horseman. Wisdom ran the pony up and down again, then came to a stop at last and tied her up to the post. He was puffing badly, and he had a stitch. It told him of his years—forty-eight? fifty?—he wasn't sure how many; but he knew he was no longer the strongest of the gipsies and that, if it came to a fight again this year, he might not be able to stand up to Black Herbie.

Black Herbie watched Wisdom's chest heaving, and then said loudly: "Bet you a dollar you can't jump her clear, then carry her over your shoulders like you used to."

"The tea urn's leaking"

This had always been Wisdom's boast when he wanted to show off his agility and the strength of his broad shoulders. He was the only gipsy who could do it. He would stand a quiet pony in an open space, with one of his children at its head, take a run, and jump over her back. Then he would turn back and lift up the pony and carry her for ten paces.

Almost every year he performed this feat at the gipsy horse-fair, which they held on Sundays during the hop-picking in the road outside the Royal Victoria. He had done it last year, and after that he had fought Black Herbie and beaten him in the field behind the pub.

"Bet you couldn't do it now. A dollar," said Black Herbie.

Wisdom stared hard at the dun. He knew he must do this thing or he must creep away, in front of them all, go back to the empty caravan alone with his shame, and leave Black Herbie to lord it in the hop-pickers' bar.

So he cried out to Herbie loudly and defiantly: "A dollar? No, a quid!"

He took off his boots, untied the pony and gave the halter rope to his eldest boy. He took twenty paces back down the road, and shouted to the gipsies to let him have plenty of room.

Then, in his stockinged feet, he started his run. Three paces from the pony he sprang, threw forward his left leg, tucked up his right, knew that he was clear of her, heard the gipsies shouting, landed on his toes, staggered, recovered himself, and turned to Black Herbie with a grin. The dun pony was standing quite still; he hadn't touched a hair on her back.

But he knew the worst part was to come. He turned swiftly and went towards the mare as, puzzled, she scraped the tarmac with her off-hind hoof and tossed her head at him in quick jerks.

Now he had to be quick, but not sudden, or she would shy and perhaps kick, and the thing he was going to do was dangerous as well as difficult. So he kept his right hand, fully stretched out, holding on to the velvet of her muzzle: smoothly he drew himself back and ducked underneath her; then in one motion he dropped his right arm and clasped her round the knees, spread his left arm round her hocks and before she knew what was happening he had her off the ground. He felt her strong hind legs straining against his arm, but his head was tucked into her belly and he bore the weight of her across his broad shoulders.

And so, bent double, he tottered along, one step, two steps, three, four, five. She was heaving against him now;

ENTHUSIASM—4

Opposition always inflames the enthusiast, never converts him.

Schiller

there was an intolerable ache in the muscles of his left arm as she fought to kick herself free; one of her forefeet rapped against his ribs, but he hardly felt the blow outside because of the pain within.

There was a thudding in his head and everything was going dark. He tried to fix his eyes on the tarmac road, on his own foot stepping forward very slowly—that was six paces. The other foot came forward—seven, eight, nine.

The thudding in his head became a kind of loud surge, like water breaking over him; he took the tenth pace and then he staggered forward. The mare's hind legs touched the ground, she reared up on them, and in that moment Wisdom pulled out his head from under her belly, clutched wildly in the gathering darkness at where he thought the halter rope was, failed to find it and, through the surging water-noise as he pitched forward, faintly heard her hoofbeats as she galloped away.

When he got up, Tim Sollars was saying: "Are you all right, Wisdom? Are you all right?"

"Where's Black Herbie?" Wisdom gasped.

"Gone into the pub."

"Well, so shall we go into the pub," said Wisdom slowly.

The hop-pickers' bar was now very full and noisy. The gipsies were getting excited and argumentative as they always did after a few drinks.

The high voices of their women contrasted with the stolid speech of the Black Country folk; a few of the Welsh pickers had come in, too, and were singing softly in a corner—the neat, pretty girls with come-hither looks who picked for Tommy Tomkins.

Somebody started playing a concertina, and a young gipsy climbed on to a table and tap-danced to the tune. This brought Mrs. Agnew out from behind the bar to tell him she'd make him pay for the table if he broke it. "Get down!" she said. "Jigging about up there like a monkey."

He got down. Mrs. Agnew exercised a strange authority over the gipsies, who were much more frightened of her than of the village policeman.

Grannie Lee noticed that Black Herbie's daughter, Sue, was drinking gin-and-it. Grannie Lee had a particular hatred of Sue, and also she was made argumentative by the rum she had drunk. So she spat out: "Gin? Hoity-toity we are getting with our cocktails!"

Sue took no notice. She took the cherry out of her glass and ate it thoughtfully. But Black Herbie said: "You leave my gel alone. What's to do with you what she drinks?"

"There's some folks," said Granny Lee, "as seems to have money to burn. Wonder where they gets it, at only one and two for the picking."

"Ha!" said Black Herbie, and grinned broadly. "You wants to get a good boss, Wisdom."

Wisdom looked puzzled and wary. "What's that? We got a good boss."

"And you wants to look after your people, Wisdom," Black Herbie went on, in the manner of one giving kindly advice to an old fool. "Letting your poor people pick for one and two."

"Well, one and two's the rate, ain't it?" said Wisdom. "Same for all?"

"Not if you've got a good boss. Not if you looks arter your people. Herbie's the boy, Herbie's the kiddie!" cried Black Herbie. "I says to Mr. Tomkins, you're a good boss, says I, what's it to be? One and two, says he. Not for we, says I. We picks for one and four, or else, says I. Or else what? says he. *Strike*, says I. So one and four it is, says he. And we shook hands on it, didn't we Betsy?"

"They shook hands on it," Betsy said.

There was a sudden silence in the bar.

To be continued next week

"September Moon," by John Moore, is to be published as a book by Collins on August 26, at 15s.

The fearful man

Continued from page 13

hand, and with it he made an attempt to hold off the man-killing bear.

In a moment the animal was upon him. A mountain of agile blackness and a smother of evil-smelling hair obliterated him. There was a flash of claws and teeth.

They crashed and rolled together in a growling flurry. The tin, like a shield, held the bear off just long enough to stop it getting the man's face into its mouth, and gave Har Singh enough distance to use his knife. He stabbed out madly.

Hot liquid gushed over him and, suddenly, all the ferocity slumped. The giant body of the bear sagged on to Har Singh, crushing him down through cruel thorns to the ground where he began suffocating beneath the weight. Then the body rolled sideways with a kick or two, and partly slid off. He could breathe again.

He lay paralysed. He could feel blood everywhere, and wondered if he would live until they came to find him. He closed his eyes, ready for death.

Hours later, a little before dawn, as he lay shivering in dew, he heard his wife calling. "Here," he whispered.

She found him. "What has happened?" she gasped. "What——" She saw the bear. "You are——"

"I am dead," replied Har Singh simply.

The woman took the tin and fetched water from the stream to bathe him. Gently, bit by bit, she washed away the blood, and the ants that had gathered on it. "Where is your wound?" she asked. "I cannot find it."

"Do you not see the blood?"

"I think it is the blood of the bear."

So Har Singh sat up and began to feel himself.

He was not entirely uninjured, of course. His skin was torn by thorns and by the bear's claws, but the animal had chewed the tin instead of his head, so that he had escaped serious injury; and, as he was washed, he found his limbs, one after another, to be whole. His face was not stripped off, nor his bowels pulled out, as might happen in an ordinary encounter with a bear.

Har Singh stood up. He was stiff, and some of his cuts began to bleed again, but he was able to pull the knife out of the carcass, and to clean it.

"What shall we do with the body?" he asked.

"Leave it. The vultures will find it, whatever we do. It is bound to be known."

"How shall I account for my injuries?" he pondered anxiously.

"You can say that you fell out of a tree," replied his resourceful wife.

So they went home with the tin and the knife.

"Will you use the tin to patch the roof at home?" asked Har Singh. "Or——"

"Oh, I shall be able to find something else for the roof," she replied. "No, I have another idea what to do with this good tin which you have got for us."

Next day, while Har Singh was away at work, she cut the tin in half lengthways, and made it into a gladstone bag.

"I know you want a bicycle," she smiled, "but that we cannot have. I have made you instead a suitcase so that, when you go from place to place, you will have something in which to carry your things, as befits a man of substance."

So Har Singh was able to stand up and look the world in the face. But he was much too frightened to admit that it was he who killed the bear, because he did not know the law about this thing, and thought he might be fined for it. THE END

Fabrics that smooth your wash-day

Continued from page 11

added to the improvised drying cabinet. Early in the programme the dress was washed and placed inside.

Conwell waited uneasily for the fifteen minutes to elapse. When the cabinet was opened he was relieved to see the unironed dress hanging dry and bandbox fresh. But although the commentator vouched for the fact that it was the same dress that had been washed a quarter of an hour earlier, Conwell felt that some viewers might be unconvinced.

Possible suspicions about the improvised drying cabinet were removed when a new domestic dryer came on the market. It was built in such a way that no substitution of garments could take place without the audience's knowledge. The manufacturer agreed to a joint demonstration of his dryer and the new finish fabrics.

Conwell now has a team of demonstrators who have toured the whole country showing minimum-iron fabrics in shops, halls and factories. At one point in the show a model appears in a minimum-iron rayon dress, removes it and tosses it into a washing machine. The climax comes when she dons the same frock, dried but unironed.

To show that a minimum-iron finish does not affect the appearance of a frock, Conwell had two identical dresses made, one with the finish and one without. Twin models wore them at a fashion show and the audience was challenged to pick out the garment with the minimum-iron finish.

"It takes an expert to detect the difference," Conwell says. "The way to tell them apart is by crushing them. The minimum-iron finish is springier and bounces back into shape sooner."

The new finish is the result of work that began in 1919. Sir Kenneth Lee showed his research staff some wool fibres in one hand and, in the other, a wad of cotton. He clenched his fists then opened them. The wool fibres sprang back because of their natural resilience. The cotton formed a soggy mass.

"There's your problem," said Sir Kenneth. "Make cotton and rayon springy like wool or real silk."

Seven years later the scientists perfected a process in which an elastic substance was introduced into cotton and rayon fibres, giving them resilience and draping qualities. This finish was introduced commercially in 1932 as "crease-resisting."

The second stage towards minimum-ironing was the search for a similar substance that could be introduced into the fibres so that a fabric would lose the creases formed in wearing and develop no further creases during the laundering process.

Another requirement was that the future minimum-iron finish should be permanent, which, in the textile trade, means that it should survive laundering and last as long as the garment.

"Scientists," Conwell says, "can get a minimum-iron effect fairly easily. They can make a finish so that you can tie the cloth in a knot, leave it for a week and the fabric springs back into shape as soon as it is untied. The trouble is that goods finished that way fall apart too quickly."

By 1951 the research men of Tootal Broadhurst Lee had two different methods of giving rayon minimum-iron properties but they were not satisfied that the processes met the company's high standards. Another fear was a repetition of the postwar nylon fiasco, when surplus nylon parachute cloth was made into garments for which it was neither suited nor intended.

To obtain the successful minimum-iron effect, scientists impregnated cloth with a chemical solution containing resin. The fabric was soaked, dried, baked in an oven and finally washed. At the end of the process, the resin solution was actually inside the textile fibres.

Conwell's firm was not the only one making such experiments. Research went on throughout the industry and particularly in the rival Calico Printers' Association laboratories, where Terylene was discovered.

In 1953 the Calico Printers' Association introduced their "Carefree Cotton" and advertised it as crease and shrink resisting. But no claim was made at the time regarding ironing.

While the two big companies hesitated to make minimum-ironing claims, the comparatively small firm of Neuss, Hesslein, Kempton, Ltd., jumped into the market in 1954 with "Super Tremendo," a cotton dress material bearing the first no-iron label.

Explaining why they allowed one of their customers to win the race for the first minimum-iron cotton, a spokesman for the Calico Printers' Association says: "We were frankly a little worried in case the new finishes were not well received by the public; for the excellence of performance depends on several factors—the right cloth, the best finish, the way the garment is made, observance of washing instructions and 'drip-drying' from a hanger."

The success of "Super Tremendo" led the Calico Printers' to enter the minimum-iron field with their own fabrics. Soon after these dress materials appeared the firm was approached by an enterprising London shirt manufacturer named Harry Rael-Brook who wanted a cotton shirting with similar properties.

Rael-Brook brought out his first no-iron cotton shirt in October, 1955, and, in the following year, he made more than 500,000 shirts from this material. Today every major shirt company has followed his example and introduced non-iron cottons into their ranges.

Wearing trials of the men's shirts revealed that the appearance of minimum-iron fabrics improved after half an hour or an hour's wear. Research men studied the finish, and after a series of laboratory experiments they came up with the reason.

When a man puts on a no-iron shirt, it may have a few minor creases in it. The body makes them disappear by generating just enough heat to do the job once done by the iron in smoothing the finish. THE END

LEAVES FROM Starke's HOLIDAY GUIDE BOOK

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EX.

B.

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WAY TO WIN

Here's how to shape a Bullet. First, grasp the broad idea by enjoying the latest winners. Then choose as your starting-point any Example from list below. To it, add TWO, THREE or FOUR words to make the whole into a bright Bullet.

Nation With Backbone	To Be Contented
Life's No Picnic When	In The City Jungle
Big Boss Kruschev	Baby Howled And
We Love Peace, But	Staggered The Americans
Planning A Family	Cheaper—Cheaper—Cheaper
Man With The Know-how	Like A Dog With Two Tails
A Little Problem	For A Little Time
Over The Prison Wall	Tittle-tattle
With A Grin	Welcome, King Football
Taught Them A Lesson	Bubbly By The Bucketful

Last six Examples are incomplete: if you wish to use one, first complete it with a word of your choice—then make your Bullet as above.

First Step To..... Surprises.....
When Jones Played..... .....Programme
That.....Circle A Nice, Clean.....

EXAMPLE .....

BULLET _____

EX. .....

B. _____

EX. .....

B _____

EX. .....

B _____

EX. .....

B. _____

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2,104 Closing Postmark MONDAY, AUG. 26

I agree to rules and enclose P.O. entry-fee at the rate of 6d. per Bullet.

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For ten winners of £2 10s., see *Bullets Bulletin.* 100 "Double Six" Prizes and 1,500 2-in-1 Awards have also been posted.

RULES 1. First Prize for best Bullet received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all Bullets received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. at the rate of 6d. per Bullet. Fee submitted will be taken to cover Bullets in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. Make P.O. payable to John Bull, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in John Bull dated Sept. 21), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, Sept. 7, for early news of No. 2,104 result.)

POST ENTRY

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